

## What do you know about asthma?

Asthma is a long-term health condition that makes it hard for people to breathe. No one really knows why we get asthma, but it is important that we know which of our friends or family have it so we can be there for them if they need help.

## The facts about asthma



Every year nearly 40,000 Australians have to go to hospital because of their asthma. That's almost the same size as 2,000 full classrooms! Half of these may be avoidable with the right support from friends, family and the community.



An 'asthma attack' can be triggered by many things and makes it very hard to breathe without your proper medication. Asthma attacks are also called asthma flare-ups or exacerbations.



One in nine (2.7 million) Australians live with asthma. This includes over 237,000 people in Western Australia. That is nearly four times the size of Optus Stadiums full for a football game!



Asthma is the leading reason why kids miss school. This means they not only miss out on learning but they also miss seeing their friends.



Having asthma can increase anxiety in children, making them feel worried and unhappy.

**Whilst not everyone with asthma ends up in hospital, poor asthma management can really affect someone's quality of life, sleep and their happiness. So it's really important to look out for and help your friends who have asthma.**

Asthma WA provides free education and support to children and families affected by asthma right across Western Australia. To find out more about our services and how we can help you, visit [asthmawa.org.au](http://asthmawa.org.au) or call us on (08) 9289 3600.



**ASTHMA WA**  
Bust out in Blue

# Busting Asthma Myths

**MYTH:** "People with asthma cannot be athletic. Asthma holds them back"

**FACT:** As long as their asthma is well-managed, people with asthma are encouraged to be physically active. There are many major athletes and entertainers that have asthma - like Fremantle Dockers footballer Stephen Hill, and popstar Pink!

**ACT:** If you have asthma follow your Asthma Action Plan and don't be scared to dream big!

**MYTH:** "Asthma isn't real. It's all in the mind"

**FACT:** Asthma is a real physical condition that affects the airway making it hard to breathe. It cannot be controlled by the mind.

**ACT:** Take some time to learn about how asthma affects your lungs and how medicine can help.

**MYTH:** "Asthma is not that serious; you can just breathe through it"

**FACT:** Asthma is a serious condition that can make people very sick if it is not well-managed. It can even cause death.

**ACT:** If someone has an asthma flare-up, they will need their reliever inhaler quickly.

**MYTH:** "Asthma attacks only happen when people run too much or are overweight"

**FACT:** Triggers are different for each person. Exercise can be a trigger for some people with asthma, but not everyone. Other triggers may include pollen, dust or smoke - and many more.

**ACT:** Learn about the different triggers. What can you do to help your friends avoid their trigger?

**MYTH:** "You can grow out of asthma"

**FACT:** Asthma can affect people of all ages. Symptoms can go away, but they also can come back later in your life

**ACT:** If you have asthma, talk to your doctor about your symptoms if they come back.

**MYTH:** "You only get asthma when you are young"

**FACT:** You can get asthma at any age, even if you didn't have it as a child.

**ACT:** Don't forget what you learn about asthma, it may be important for you or your friends later in life.

