

April 2018

Asthma Link

Newsletter of Asthma Waikato | Te Ha Ora Huango

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From the Manager

We have adopted a phrase to focus our education around this year here at Asthma Waikato. We already provide quality education and advice and have done for 40+ years, but there is always room to improve. All too often we have families who come to us who are battling confusion and frustration as they don't understand such things as what the medications are for, why they should be using a spacer and what the medicines actually do. We want to make sure the education we

give meets the public exactly where they need the most help and so we are really focusing on the 'why' in our consults. Compliance is key for asthma management and so the phrase we have adopted is: When people know the 'why', they're more likely to comply.

Alongside this, we are also aiming to ensure the 'main messages' get across during our consults and that folk who come to see us leave with more than they arrived with - in a good way! We have developed the Asthma STAR system to help. You can read about this on the next page.

Running a charity is always a challenging undertaking and although there are many highs and things to be celebrated every

day, often there is also a lot of change and curve-balls being thrown when you least expect it. However, we don't let anything hold us down for long. I came across another phrase the other day that I think is a great optimistic way to look at all things: 'A step backwards after a step forwards is not a disaster, it's more like a cha cha. Just dance.'

Cha cha cha. Happy reading,

Sheryl Long, Operational Manager



The Asthma STAR system is primarily for use with children who have been prescribed a metered dose inhaler (MDI/puffer). There are some key points that we need families to take home with them after their consult with us. Often we give a lot of information and education in one sitting which has the potential to be a little overwhelming. So, to help with this, we have developed the Asthma STAR system.

The letters of STAR stand for different key messages. To check that we have properly communicated these messages to families we see, we ask them about each of these areas at the end of a consult and then the children are given an Asthma STAR sticker. Ensuring we correctly communicate the 'why' of every message is important in order to achieve compliance and therefore better asthma management.



S = Spacer

Spacers are not just for kids! Using an MDI (puffer) with a spacer delivers up to 50% more medicine to your lungs than using a puffer alone.

Why? Because spacers slow down the speed of the medicine coming out of the inhaler, suspending it briefly in the chamber, making it easier to breathe in. Using a puffer without a spacer means the majority of the medicine ends up hitting the back of the throat, resulting in an increased risk of thrush and other oral problems. It also means a reduced amount of medicine is getting to the lungs where it is needed.

T = Technique and triggers

Technique

A recent study in Australia showed that nearly 90% of Australian asthmatics were using their inhalers incorrectly (Ref: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5278803). We aren't much better here in NZ! It's so important to use the right technique.

Why? Technique is vital to ensure you are getting the correct amount of medicine, that the medicine is mixed correctly with propellant and the medicine is getting down into the lungs properly to be effective.

Triggers

These are the things that flare your asthma - these can range from just about anything - the family dog to cockroaches to even chlorinated swimming pools. There are some very common ones though and you need to be aware of them.

Why? So that you know how to minimise their effect on you or your child in order to manage the asthma.

Meet Yehudit



Hi all, my name is Yehudit Henson and I recently joined the Asthma Waikato team in the role of Respiratory Nurse Educator. In my nursing career I have predominately worked within the Intensive Care Unit where I have cared for people who became very sick with asthma, and now I would like to focus my care and attention to those who need my help before hospitalisation. I am super approachable and will be here to support your family/whānau, and your asthmatic child.

A = Asthma Action Plan

All asthmatics should have an up to date Asthma Action Plan that details their current medications and what to do in an emergency, signed by their GP.

Why? In order to know what to do during the stages of well, worse and worried - and what to do in an emergency. Once completed, this Action Plan should be colour copied and made available to every person involved in the child's care, eg. school, kindy, relatives. Asthma Waikato can provide an Action Plan for your child which can be taken to the doctor to fill in.

R = Review

Asthma is a reversible condition and it is also highly changeable. All asthmatics should be regularly reviewing their own symptoms and also book in a scheduled review with their doctor every 6 months.

Why? This is to check symptoms and control and also to ascertain the best treatment regime to gain that control. As you can see on the next page there are many different devices available to deliver the medicine and there are also different treatment regimes that can be employed to gain the best control. The goal is to be on the least amount of medicine necessary to achieve the best control - not too much, not too little!

[Check out the full article on our website blog - www.asthmawaikato.org.nz/blog](http://www.asthmawaikato.org.nz/blog)

Family Feedback

"I've enjoyed this visit. The one thing I will take away is helping my grandson to use his inhaler properly. A visit well worth coming to and can't wait for follow up. Both the nurse and manager were awesome and very proactive and passionate about their job and helping whānau to manage the asthma. A good plan and controlled management to help keep asthma under control. Thank you so much."

Tania and Whānau

Asthma Devices



Which device best suits you? First and foremost you need to know and understand your inhaler and how it works for you and what type of inhaler you are prescribed. There are two main types of asthma inhalers - metered dose inhalers (MDI) and dry powder inhalers. Relievers, symptom controllers, preventers and combinations come in both dry powder inhalers and MDIs.

Metered Dose Inhalers (aerosol inhalers)

- » When an MDI canister is pressed, a measured dose of medicine is released through the mouthpiece. An MDI should always be administered through a spacer to receive optimal benefits. Infants and young children will need an adult to help administer an MDI through a spacer or a spacer and mask. A haleraid device is available for anybody who may have difficulty in pressing the inhaler.

Dry Powder Inhalers

- » **Turbuhaler** A turbuhaler is a breath-activated inhaler. Your breath in must be steady and deep.
- » **Accuhaler** An accuhaler is also a breath-activated device. The doses of the medicine are set into a foil strip inside the accuhaler.

There is no need for the use of a spacer with dry powdered inhalers and for this reason teenagers often find them much more convenient. However, depending on the type of medicine in the dry powder inhaler, the age range for use may vary. Dry powder inhalers will need to be kept away from moist and humid areas to prevent the powder from binding.

So which one is best for you? Below is a list of some of the pros and cons of each device which will need to be taken into consideration when discussing which device would be best with your GP.

Device	Pros	Cons
Metered Dose Inhaler (MDI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventers, relievers and symptom controllers are available in MDI • Easy to use with young children with a spacer and or mask 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be used with a spacer to achieve optimal results – teens and adults can find this cumbersome • If used without a spacer (not recommended except in emergency situations where one is not available), there is a high risk of oral thrush and other side effects. • Not all MDIs have counters making it difficult to keep an eye on doses left • Can be tricky to push the canister down for some (although a device called a haleraid can be used to help with this)
Turbuhaler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventers, relievers and symptom controllers are available in turbuhaler • Breath-activated • No spacer required (great for teens and adults) • Less risk of oral side effects • Training whistle available • Powder cannot be felt as it is inhaled • Very portable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some don't have counters showing only when there are 20 doses remaining • May clog if exhaled into or kept somewhere damp • Lactose carrier – not suitable for people with lactose intolerance or dairy allergy • Good technique required
Accuhaler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breath-activated • No loading • Individually foiled doses • Attached cover • No spacer required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to check if dose has gone, must ensure lever fully open • A bit bulky • Lactose carrier can have a taste to it. Not suitable for people with lactose intolerance or dairy allergy • Unable to get back to missed doses



A new instructor at the COPD group



At the end of 2017, we farewelled Neil Brown who has been the exercise instructor for the COPD group for the last 15 years. While we wish Neil all the very best for the future and thank him for his commitment to the group over the years, we also welcome Ann-Maree as the new instructor for the group. Ann-Maree works for Pulse Personal Training, managed by Jenny Tulloch and we are very grateful for their input in keeping our class attendees active. The COPD group meets on Wednesdays at 1 pm at 68 Maeroa Rd, Hamilton. A \$3 donation is requested to help cover costs. The classes are open to anybody suffering from chronic asthma, COPD or bronchitis as a place to exercise safely within a group, as well as gaining support, friendship and information on their condition. Please contact Asthma Waikato for more information on these classes if you are interested.

the warehouse //

Raising awareness in the community

We have been so privileged to have been chosen for the Warehouse Bags for Good programme in two locations, Te Rapa and Central Hamilton. There is a collection box at each of these stores and shoppers get to decide who they wish to support by popping a token in the box. Please support us when you are shopping at The Warehouse. We are raising money for our asthma bags project which along with the provision of an asthma bag to each asthmatic child we see, is part of a bigger educational project involving the nurse consult in clinic and also school and community sessions.



Thank you to our all our supporters and sponsors

Without the generous support of these organisations throughout 2018, Asthma Waikato would not be able to function. We are so grateful! Thank you!

World Asthma Day and Balloon Day

1ST MAY 2018

Could you help raise awareness/ money for us? Hold a 'blue' multi day at work, school or kindy? Run a competition to raise money?

If you haven't had to think about your breathing today, take a moment on World Asthma Day to think about those who don't have this luxury.

plus...

The Warehouse, Gallaghers Charitable Trust, Raglan Pharmacy, Hillcrest Pharmacy, Columbus, FastLane Café, Tui Medical Centre Te Rapa, Pharmacy 547, Unichem Rototuna, Tui Med Rototuna, Beerescourt Life Pharmacy, Punnet, Steve Outram.



Kiwis of all ages are dying from asthma each year!
You can help save their lives by supporting us to educate and prevent this happening...



DONATE NOW

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