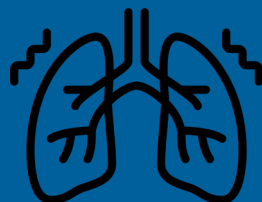


Bushfires and asthma

Asthma symptoms to recognise during bushfire season



COUGH



WHEEZE



CHEST TIGHTNESS



SHORTNESS OF BREATH

First aid for asthma

Bushfire smoke and debris can trigger asthma symptoms. If asthma symptoms occur:

- Follow your personal written asthma action plan
- If you don't have an action plan, take 4 separate puffs of a blue/grey reliever via a spacer
- If the symptoms aren't going away or are getting worse, then follow the steps in

First Aid for Asthma

First Aid for Asthma chart tailored to combination inhalers

The new [First Aid for Asthma](#) chart is based on combination inhalers with Formoterol (Symbicort, Fostair, DuoResp, BiResp) and outlines how to use one of these inhalers if this is the person's usual reliever. It is designed for patients using a combination preventer and reliever medication that uses formoterol as the reliever.

[First Aid for Asthma 12+](#) and the [First Aid for Asthma Children Under 12](#) charts can be downloaded from our website: nationalasthma.org.au.



Asthma management during the bushfire season

For people with asthma living in high risk bushfire zones, the bushfire season is time to be on high alert for asthma symptoms. Smoke and increased air pollution from fires can trigger asthma symptoms, as can high emotions such as stress and anxiety.

Have an asthma bushfire plan

Anyone with asthma living in a high-risk bushfire zone should include asthma management in their fire safety survival plan:

- Keep your reliever handy at all times
- Make sure you have plenty of asthma medication available to you
- If you decide to evacuate make sure your reliever and other medications go with you
- Communicate your medication requirements to evacuation personnel and volunteers
- Continue to use your asthma medications as prescribed by your doctor
- Always follow your personal Asthma Action Plan



Bushfires and asthma

Be aware of the risk

Bushfire smoke and debris can trigger asthma symptoms, such as:

- coughing
- wheezing
- chest tightness
- shortness of breath.

If you have asthma or other chronic respiratory conditions, or if you are responsible for a child or older person with asthma, be aware of the risk and the fact that these triggers can linger long after the actual bushfire threat has subsided.

This is also critically important for the many hundreds of volunteers, emergency personnel and media representatives working within the fire zones.

People in areas not directly impacted by the bushfires, including built-up areas, are also at risk as winds can carry smoke and ash particles long distances.

Try to reduce exposure to smoke by staying indoors with the doors and windows closed, doing as little outdoor activity as possible and using recirculated air in the car.

Download asthma action plans



Download First Aid for Asthma Charts



Disclaimer: It is important to note that information contained in this fact sheet is not intended to replace professional medical advice. Any questions regarding a medical diagnosis or treatment should be directed to a medical practitioner.



Information for health professionals

Increased presentations for asthma should be expected around fire zones and in other areas affected by smoke haze. General practices and pharmacies around these areas should ensure they have good supplies of reliever medications and spacers, particularly for emergency use.

For more information

Visit nationalasthma.org.au for more asthma management resources.