

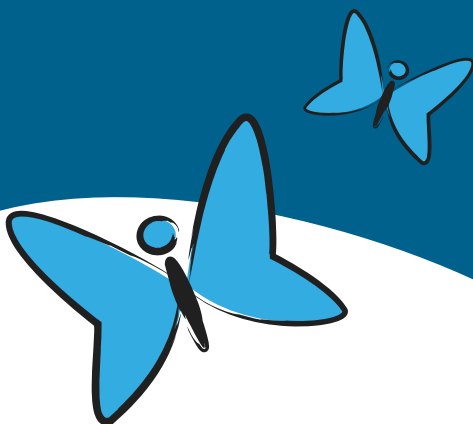


National  
Asthma  
Council  
AUSTRALIA



# Live better with asthma and allergies

Discover the Sensitive Choice® blue  
butterfly and family-friendly resources  
for managing asthma and allergies



## ABOUT US

### **Sensitive Choice® helps people live better with asthma and allergies.**

The National Asthma Council Australia created the Sensitive Choice® program to identify products and services that are asthma and allergy aware through the trusted blue butterfly.

Products and services that carry the blue butterfly have been reviewed and approved by an independent expert panel that determines their potential benefit to people with asthma or allergies.

The Sensitive Choice® website is an information hub, packed with tips and resources to help with asthma and allergy management.

Look for the blue butterfly on hundreds of products and services.



Learn more at **[sensitivechoice.com](https://sensitivechoice.com)**



## Our approval process

Products and services that carry the Sensitive Choice® blue butterfly have been reviewed and approved by an independent, volunteer panel consisting of a variety of experts across medical, scientific and other relevant professions to determine their potential benefit to people with asthma and allergies.

Sensitive Choice® empowers people with asthma and allergies to make informed decisions about products and services that may help reduce their exposure to triggers and support their respiratory health.

Panel members can include an allergist, a general practitioner, a pharmacist, a respiratory physician and an engineer.

## WHAT IS ASTHMA?

**Asthma is a chronic inflammatory lung condition that affects the airways.**

Asthma is caused by inflammation and tightening of the thin muscle around the airways, which carry air into our lungs.



Asthma affects about  
**2.8 MILLION** people in  
Australia (1 in 9 people).

About **615,000** people in  
New Zealand have asthma  
(1 in 8 people).



Sometimes people with asthma find it harder to breathe in and out, because the airways in their lungs become narrower. It is like trying to breathe through a thin straw. At other times their breathing is normal.

Common symptoms include:

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

These symptoms can be triggered by different things for different people.

There is no cure for asthma, but it can usually be well controlled. Good asthma management and education can help people with asthma lead active, healthy lives.

## For good asthma control, you need:

1

Medicines – taken the right way, at the right time as prescribed by your doctor.

2

Regular medical visits for check-ups and to learn more about living with asthma.

3

An asthma action plan, so you know what to do when symptoms occur.



## WHAT ARE ALLERGIES?

**Allergies occur when a person's immune system reacts to substances that are harmless to most people.**

**These substances are known as allergens.**

Examples of allergens include house dust mites, pollen, mould, pet dander, smoke and chemicals.

Contact with one of these allergens can cause a person with allergies to develop a reaction that leads to redness and swelling. This can affect the nose and/or eyes, skin, and lungs.

Up to 80% of people with asthma have allergies like hay fever. Allergies may run in families. The genetic or inherited tendency to develop allergic diseases is known as atopy.



## What you can do:

1

Ask your doctor or pharmacist for information and advice about asthma and allergies.

2

Your doctor can help you identify possible allergic triggers and order or arrange for allergy testing.

3

The best way to manage allergies is to avoid the allergens, but this can be a challenge.

## KNOW YOUR TRIGGERS

### **Everyone has different asthma or allergy triggers.**

If you think you might have an allergy, speak with your doctor to work out what's causing the reaction and how you can manage it.

Most people are allergic to more than one trigger and sometimes the response is different. For example, you might get itchy eyes around cats but a runny nose during pollen season.

Once you know what to focus on, you might be able to avoid or reduce your exposure to some triggers.

It's not always possible to avoid triggers entirely but reducing your exposure could make symptoms easier to manage.

Allergen avoidance strategies should be used in combination with your recommended medicines and do not replace your doctor's advice.



## Common household triggers include:



DUST MITES



MOULD



POLLEN



PETS



SMOKE



VOLATILE ORGANIC  
COMPOUNDS (VOCs)

Visit **[sensitivechoice.com](https://sensitivechoice.com)** for  
information to help manage triggers.



## CREATING A HEALTHY HOME

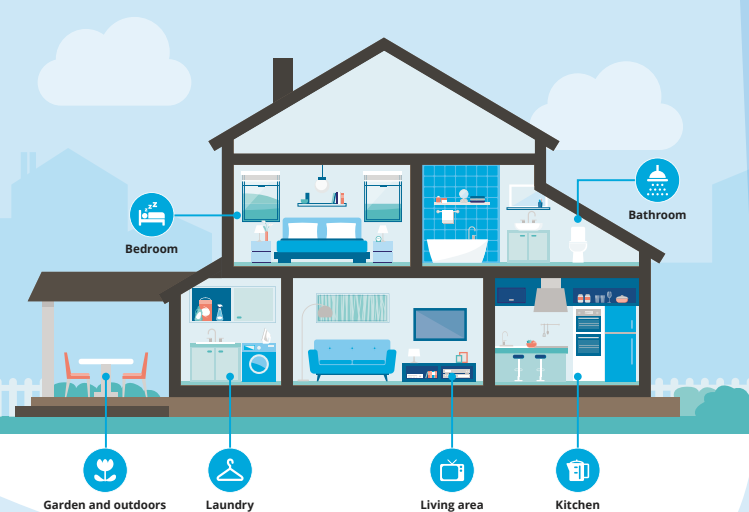
**There are steps you can take around the home to create a healthier, allergy aware environment.**

For example, did you know high indoor humidity levels can create ideal conditions for mould and dust mites to thrive?

From improving air circulation, to choosing products that avoid certain chemicals, the strategies to consider depend on your family's triggers and circumstances.

Visit **sensitivechoice.com** for information and tips to help manage asthma and allergy triggers.

Find further information at  
**sensitivechoice.com**



## Some simple tips that can make a difference:

- If **dust mites** are an issue, washing bedding regularly in water hotter than 60°C can help.
- Use extractor fans in bathrooms, kitchens and laundries to aid natural ventilation and reduce indoor humidity levels to help prevent **mould** growth.
- Vacuum carpets, curtains and upholstery regularly using a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter.
- Avoid hanging laundry outside to dry on high **pollen** count days.



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For more information, visit:  
**[sensitivechoice.com](https://sensitivechoice.com)**

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**[@sensitivechoice](https://www.instagram.com/sensitivechoice)**

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