

## Allergies and Asthma

Asthma is a chronic lung affliction that is characterized by breathing difficulties. People who suffer from asthma have extra sensitive or hyper-responsive airways. In the course of an asthma attack, the airways suffer irritation and react by narrowing and constricting, resulting in increased resistance to airflow, and obstruction of the flow of air flow through the air passages to and from the lungs. The cause of the inflammation which underlying most asthma in younger sufferers is the result of one or more allergies. Compared to people in less affluent rural parts of the world, a greater number of people in western countries are affected by allergies. Additionally, allergy rates are on the rise.

There is increasing evidence that virtually proves that asthma is an environmentally-induced disease. This would suggest that asthma may be able to be prevented by altering our environment. The treatment of asthma by removing the allergic cause can be very successful when the trigger is easily removed. An example of this is when the allergic trigger is a dust or vapour inhaled only on the job. This is also true when the trigger is a domestic pet such as a cat or dog. Though reluctance to part with a much-loved pet commonly prevents using this successful measure. The most common cause of asthma is a house dust mite allergy. Sufficiently eradicating mites to have a great effect on asthma requires a major lifestyle change on the part of the sufferer and is very costly to achieve.

In the future there may be treatments which diminish, modify, or even abolish the allergic process in the body. Due to the great number of asthma sufferers in the world, not surprisingly, this is an area of considerable ongoing research.