


# Randomized Feasibility Study of a Novel Experience-Based Internet Intervention to Support Self-Management in Chronic Asthma


Intervention and control website content

# Intervention homepage

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## Living with Asthma



Thames Valley Primary Care Research Partnership 

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- Living with asthma

**EXPERIENCES BY TOPIC**

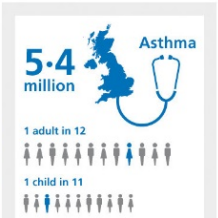

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### Welcome to the Living with Asthma site



About five million people in the UK have asthma, a condition that affects the airways (the tubes carry air in and out of the lungs). People with asthma have sensitive airways which become irritated in some situations, making it more difficult to breathe. Oxford University researchers interviewed 37 people about their experiences of asthma.

We have grouped video and audio extracts from their interviews under 23 topic headings (see above and to the left) which include all of the different experiences in the interviews. You can also find out more about the individuals we talked to by looking at the groupings on the right hand side.




**EXPERIENCES BY GROUP**

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- Childhood onset/Adult onset
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**HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TALK ABOUT ASTHMA: VIDEO CLIPS**



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Glossary

Research conducted by researchers at the University of Oxford, funded by the National Institute for Health Research. Information sources: Asthma UK, NHS Choices, Patient.co.uk, British Thoracic Society and British Lung Foundation.

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# Medication and treatment - summary

## Living with Asthma




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**Medication and treatment - inhalers**

Although there's no cure for asthma, there are many treatments available which should enable most people to control their symptoms well and live a normal life. Treatment is based on two important goals

- relief of symptoms
- preventing future symptoms and attacks from developing

Treatments are most commonly given as an inhaler (puffer) or sometimes in tablet form. In this summary we focus on inhalers. Some inhalers are for relief of symptoms (relievers) and there are others, usually inhaled steroids, which are taken every day *whether or not* the person is experiencing symptoms (preventers). While some people may manage their symptoms well with only a reliever or only a preventer inhaler, it is quite common for people to use a combination of treatments. A regular asthma review with a health professional can ensure that the best combination of medication is being used. Asthma can change over time so it's important to keep a regular check on things.

**Reliever inhalers** are the ones that are taken immediately to relieve asthma symptoms. They are bronchodilators, which means they relax the muscles surrounding the narrowed airways (bronchi), making it easier to breathe. Some of these are short acting, their effects last 3-5 hours. They have a variety of different names – most commonly Ventolin (salbutamol) and Bricanyl (terbutaline), although very often people referred to them by their colour (blue). People who have very mild asthma, or whose asthma is only triggered infrequently, sometimes only need to use a reliever inhaler for either immediate relief, or to prevent symptoms in the short term such as before doing some exercise. They work quickly - within about 15 minutes breathing should feel easier. Susan said, "When it works it usually works quite quickly... like it'll usually start improving within a few minutes."



Charles and John have relatively mild asthma and use a minimal amount of medication.



Charles was given a Ventolin inhaler when he was first diagnosed, and was later prescribed a preventer inhaler to use as well. Nowadays he rarely experiences symptoms.





John considers his asthma to be fairly mild and uses his medication mostly in the winter months. His asthma doesn't prevent him from playing rugby at a professional level.



People may use the blue reliever inhaler in conjunction with a **preventer inhaler**, which is an inhaled steroid. The idea of steroids can worry people who associate them with banned substances taken by athletes. As Julie commented, "I did at first wonder about whether they were the same thing as these anabolic steroids that sports people take and was I sort of going to balloon into a great muscley being because I didn't fancy that very much." In fact they are very different, although there can be some side effects (see below). There are a range of different steroid inhalers, including Pulmicort (budesonide) and Clenil Modulle (beclomethasone). They are often brown or orange.

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# Living with asthma – audio & transcript

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## Living with Asthma



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**HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TALK ABOUT ASTHMA: VIDEO CLIPS**




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**Living with Asthma**

Lisa was diagnosed aged 12. The asthma nurse gave her a DVD which helped because she could see other children talking about having asthma. It helped her to get used to the idea.



00:12 03:02

Topic: Finding information about asthma  
See all of: Lisa

Yeah, I was in my last year of primary school, and I just remember really being out of breath quite a lot at PE and my mum brought me to the doctor, and they tested me or, you know, checked me, my peak flow, and then was just diagnosed then. So it was around, I suppose, September 1998 before I started secondary school, just

So you were about eleven.


Yeah.

And how did you feel when you were told?


I wasn't really too sure what asthma was. I just knew I couldn't breathe properly [laughs]. That was really it until it was just when I got older, and went in the secondary school and more people had it, and I realised, you know, that it was actually quite dangerous but I think then I panicked a bit more but, you know, when I was first diagnosed it didn't really didn't really annoy me [laughs].

# Filtering experiences by gender

## Living with Asthma



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### Interviewees by gender

Women with asthma

Men with asthma

**Peter**


Peter, age 62, was diagnosed with asthma at age 45. He is white British and married with two adult children. He is a retired IT professional. Peter's symptoms vary in severity, sometimes mild, and at other times quite debilitating.



[Read more](#)

**Tomas**


Tomas, age 16, was diagnosed with asthma at age 6 months. He is white and lives at home with his parents and brother. Tomas is a keen rugby player and thinks that his asthma is not stopping him from doing the sport he likes. His parents have always encouraged and supported him.



[Read more](#)

**Mark**


Mark, age 49, was diagnosed with asthma at age 6. He is white British and married with two children (aged 8 and 11) who also suffer from asthma. Mark himself has a number of health conditions as well as asthma, and at the moment is unable to work.



[Read more](#)

**Tim**

Tim, age 63, was diagnosed with asthma at age 25 although he had symptoms of asthma as a child. He is white British and lives with his wife and has spent some of his life living in Australia. He is an author.




[Read more](#)

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# Filtering experiences by age

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### Interviewees by age

**Catherine**

Catherine, age 39, has had asthma (diagnosed at age 5) and a number of other health conditions since birth. She is white British, single and works with young people who have learning disabilities. During her childhood she found that she was unable to take part in many things and felt quite isolated.

[Read more](#)

**Jenny**

Jenny, age 34, was diagnosed with asthma at age 18. She is white British and lives at home with her parents who help care for her when she is unwell.

[Read more](#)

**Susan**

Susan, age 31, was diagnosed with asthma at 18. She is white British and single and enjoys a career as an academic researcher. Susan had hay fever as a child which became more severe when she was at secondary school and she was diagnosed with asthma.

[Read more](#)

**Philip**

Philip, age 32, was diagnosed with severe asthma at age 6. He is white Irish, single and works as a web developer. His asthma is generally only triggered by hay fever and so is usually at its worse during summer.

[Read more](#)

Under 18

18-30

31-40

41-50

51-60


61-70

Over 70

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# Health professionals talk about asthma

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### What is Asthma?



Jon Ayres OBE – Professor of Environmental & Respiratory Medicine, Institute of Occupational and Environmental Medicine University of Birmingham



Dr Helen Salisbury – GP, Oxford



Jo Riley – Lead Respiratory Nurse, Churchill Hospital, Oxford

We have interviewed some health professionals to get professional perspectives on asthma it's treatments and management. Below you will find links to clips from health professionals.

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Click on the links below to view clips

- A doctor explains what Asthma is.
- A specialist nurse talks about the different types of asthma.

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## Living with Asthma



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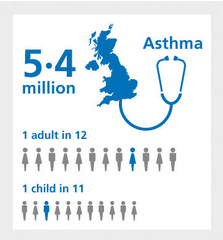

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Welcome to the Living with Asthma site



About five million people in the UK have asthma, a condition that affects the airways (the tubes that carry air in and out of the lungs). People with asthma have sensitive airways which become irritated in some situations, making it more difficult to breathe.

Researchers at the University of Oxford have put together this online resource for people living with asthma. We have grouped information under 10 topic headings (see left and above). You can also find out more on asthma by looking at the videos recorded with health professionals, on the right hand side.



HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TALK ABOUT ASTHMA: VIDEO CLIPS

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**Symptoms of asthma**


The symptoms of asthma include:

- feeling breathless (you may gasp for breath)
- a tight chest, like a band tightening around it
- wheezing, which makes a whistling sound when you breathe
- coughing, particularly at night and early morning
- attacks triggered by exercise, exposure to allergens and other triggers



You may have one or more of these symptoms. Symptoms that are worse during the night or with exercise can mean that asthma is getting worse. Talk to your doctor or asthma nurse about this.

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**What is good asthma care?**

The aim of treatment is to get your asthma under control and keep it that way. Everyone with asthma should be able to lead a full and unrestricted life. The treatments available for asthma are effective in most people and should enable you to be free from symptoms.

Your doctor or nurse will tailor your asthma treatment to your symptoms. Sometimes, you may need to be on higher levels of medication than at other times.

You should be offered:

- care at your GP surgery provided by doctors and nurses trained in asthma management.
- full information about your condition and how to control it
- involvement in making decisions about your treatment
- regular checks to ensure that your asthma is under good control and your treatment is right for you (which should be at least once a year)
- a written personal asthma action plan agreed with your doctor or nurse

**Be in control**

- Take time to find out about your asthma.
- Use a peak flow meter to monitor whether your asthma is getting better or worse.
- Visit your doctor at least once a year for a check-up and to discuss treatment options.


For more information see Asthma UK's website.

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# Health professionals talk about asthma

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### Health professionals talk about Asthma


|   |  |
|---|--|
|  | Jon Ayres OBE – Professor of Environmental & Respiratory Medicine, Institute of Occupational and Environmental Medicine University of Birmingham |
|  | Dr Helen Salisbury – GP, Oxford  |
|  | Jo Riley – Lead Respiratory Nurse, Churchill Hospital, Oxford  |

We have interviewed some health professionals to get professional perspectives on asthma, its treatments and management. Below you will find links to clips from health professionals.

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