

# ASTHMA



## Naturopathy



# Asthma & Naturopathy

Let's talk about asthma. Asthma is an airway condition or an inflammation of the airways.

So what is actually happening when you experience asthma?

The symptoms are; you get breathless, wheeze and cough.

You can also produce a thick sticky mucus, so it can be an extremely uncomfortable and often a frightening condition to either experience yourself or to witness somebody else having, when it is an asthma attack.



The airways are inflamed and you get a contraction of the bronchial tubes.

Often, what is happening underneath is a hypersensitivity reaction taking place in the bronchial walls.

So when we say hypersensitivity it's like an exaggerated response of the airways to certain stimulus.

There are quite a lot of causes of asthma. They can be very individual and some people can suffer from a few different forms at different times.



## Causes

Some other causes can be **inhaled allergens**. So **pollens** and things like that can upset people in different seasons.

We need to look at **viral infections** as it is common for people to develop asthma after a virus.

This happens especially to children. They might develop a cold, then after they get the cold you might notice them starting to wheeze. You might even have experienced this yourself.



**Smoke, mould, animals, cats etc.**

**Anything that can cause an allergic reaction potentially can cause an asthmatic response.**

Sometimes people can react to **changes in temperature**, so even when it's cold they might get an asthma attack.

There are couple of different contributing factors as to why somebody may get asthma, and somebody else who gets exposed to the same triggers or allergens, don't get asthma.

There are a couple of things to consider.



There is a **genetic link**.

So often people that have asthma there will be a family history, either of other atopic conditions like eczema and hay fever or a history of asthma in the family.

**Allergies** are another thing to consider.

If you have allergies to different foods like eggs, dairy, soy, citrus, nuts, etc., any of these allergies can be a contributing factor.

Also look at your **environment** such as pollution as we discussed before.



You can look at the **infectious origin**. Did you get an infection that triggered your asthma?

**Emotional factors** need to be looked at. You can have emotional factors, causing asthma.

**Nutritional factors** need to be looked at.

In speaking of nutritional factors, as a naturopath, this is one of the areas that we can have the biggest influence over and there are products you can organize and get yourself from a health store.



## Vitamin C

The first and the biggest one is vitamin C.  
We're talking about fairly big doses.  
Take a minimum of 2 grams per day.

This is particularly helpful in exercise induced asthma. Vitamin C is a natural antihistamine.

## Zinc & B6

So many asthmatics are deficient in B6 and also zinc (for immune support).

These two are big cofactors in the body for chemical and nutritional reactions.





## B3

B3 actually inhibits histamine release.  
(Histamine is one of the mediators in the allergic response).

## Vitamin E

Vitamin E is an antioxidant. Use this one in particular if the cause is an environmental pollutant.

## Magnesium

Magnesium is really important, it is a natural muscle relaxant.



Our bronchial muscles are smooth muscles, so it will have an effect on relaxing the bronchial muscles.

## Ginkgo

Ginkgo is a herb which is used in asthma. It inhibits platelet activating factor. Platelet activating factors are chemicals that are released by the body in response to a stimulus.

Without getting too technical it's a part of the immune system response and Ginkgo inhibits this, so it downplays that immune response.



A couple of other nutrients that do help are **Quercetin** which is a flavonoid that's found in citrus, berries and things like that.

**Taurine** is an amino acid, which is also really helpful for this.

### Omega 3

**Omega 3** is important. It has been found that a lot of asthmatics have high Omega 6. Omega 3 and Omega 6 work in ratio. If we have too much Omega 6 and not enough Omega 3 we have a little more emphasis on the inflammatory pathways, rather than the anti-inflammatory pathways.



So we need to address that ratio. So by increasing your Omega 3 it helps to improve the balance towards the anti-inflammatory pathway.

## **NAC - N-Acetyl Cysteine**

NAC restores normal liver levels of glutathione (one of the major anti-oxidants in the body) and helps to heal the liver damage caused by acetaminophen. It's also used in conventional medicine to break down large amounts of mucus, a common symptom of conditions such as emphysema, bronchitis, pneumonia, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)



## Treating The Gut

Treating the gut is really helpful to reduce the allergy response, reduce food sensitivities and it often plays a role in all of those immune mediating responses.

## Herbs

A couple of herbs that are often utilized in asthma treatments are:

**Echinacea, Eyebright, Liquorice, Goldenseal, Baical Skullcap, Adhatoda,** which is an ayurvedic herb that great for asthma.



I hope you find this rundown about the naturopathic perspective on asthma helpful.



**This Ebook is a collaboration between  
Jayne Larkins from Vital Child  
& Global Healing Exchange**

