



Speaking from Experience Asthma in Adults

Transcript for chapter 5 of 12: Impact on lifestyle

John: I don't want to this stop me from doing those things I like, or living the life I live.

De: To me, asthma is not a huge part of my life. It's not a traumatic part of my life. It never has been.

John: I was told that I would grow out of it - I didn't. On the other hand, I was told that I wouldn't do lots of things. I was told that I wouldn't be able to hold down a job, or that I wouldn't be able to play sport. I was told that I would never be around horses, and dogs and cats. You know, I was told lots of things. None of which were true.

Glenda: As little as I can make it, but yes it has, I have to say. For instance, I find that I can't afford to get terribly over-tired. If I get over-tired I find that I am much more liable to get asthma. I can't go to parties where people smoke. It doesn't matter so much nowadays, but thirty years ago it really ruined my social life. I've always been allergic to cigarette smoke, it has always had a very bad effect on me. I didn't play a lot of sport because when I was young, if you had asthma you didn't exercise. Thank goodness they've got rid of that idea now. They now know that exercise is good.

Margaret and Michael: You play tennis, you play basketball, netball. So provided it's controlled you're able to do those things that other normal people are expected to be able to do.

Margaret and Michael: Yeah, and it's really good, I think, that I have discovered that I can pretty much do everything everybody else does. I can pass that onto my kids, and say that this isn't something that's going to affect your life in any really negative way because you learn how to make sure... as long as you're medicated you can do pretty much anything.

Arthur: I just go about whatever I want to do. I get short of breath after a time, if I go walking. But I play bowls and ten pin bowling and it doesn't affect me at all.

Margaret and Michael: During Stephen's pregnancy, your asthma was okay.

Margaret and Michael: I was actually better.

Margaret and Michael: And you felt you were better. And we thought, well, when Marg's pregnant her asthma is under control, but then with Jacqueline it got worse.

Margaret and Michael: It went the other way.

John: One of the positive factors about asthma is that it has probably made me more determined or given me that perseverance to get through what everyone has to get through. You know, everyone has good times and bad times.

Leisl: Since '93 my asthma got quite severe, or they classed it as severely chronic. And I battled on the next couple of years, in and out of hospital, and starting to wonder what on



earth was happening with my life, because I couldn't work and had days when I was getting rather depressed.

De: I've never felt that it has compromised me and my job. I've never lost a job or gained a job because of it.

Leisl: I was still getting worsening asthma. And I decided that I couldn't go back to work, and I was put onto a disability support pension.

Margaret and Michael: The last job I went for I made a point of letting them know that yes, I do get asthma. And yes, the chances are that I will need to take some time occasionally and that I do have to go to hospital occasionally. So just to let them know that if I was to have an attack at school, to follow these directions and get ambulances and things. But they've always been accepted without a problem.

Leisl: By that stage, walking any distance was out of the question. And when I say "any distance", I'm talking from my bedroom to the bathroom, which was probably about five to six metres. Mum was washing my hair, cooking for me, I was basically bed-ridden.

John: I shared a room with two brothers, there were three of us in the bedroom. And to be sitting up all night... and you know, kids being kids, they'd say, "Oh for f... sake! Shut up! I'm trying to get to sleep!"

Leisl: By this stage, the whole family was desperate. And that was the other thing - it causes real turmoil in the family. My mum and dad were stressed to the max. They couldn't go anywhere because I always had to have someone in the house.

De: I do occasionally get chronic wheezy sessions that go on for sometimes months.

Leisl: My day would consist of telly, I'm very crafty so I spent a lot of time cross-stitching and quilting. And that was sort of like if I could do something by the end of the day then, well, you've achieved a little something.