



Speaking from Experience Asthma in Childhood

Transcript for chapter 8 of 12: Triggers

Marilyn (has three sons with asthma) and Matthew: My middle son, his asthma is usually related to a viral infection which he may get once a year.

Paul, Vicky and Michelle (who has asthma): We had to see allergists and various paediatricians, who were looking for various things, and it resulted in quite a number of dietary changes in our family. She has so many allergies, or they were trying to cut out so many possible triggers for her asthma - colours, preservatives, flavourings, salicylates (which are naturally occurring chemicals in most foods) - that it changed the way we ate initially.

Lavinia and Geoff (have two daughters with asthma): If the weather changes, that will set me off.

Vladamier (has a son with asthma): Well, it has made us a lot more conscious of things like dust and allergies, and anything that might be allergy related from sprays to all sorts of other things. We can't have cats.

Marilyn: We were renovating a house, and it was geared to children and living with asthma. Particularly my eldest son who has allergy-based asthma, we went into what was called a 'breathe easy' low allergy living design. So no carpets, no fans on heaters, bedding covered with dust mite protectors, and we have found that there has been an improvement.

Matthew (has asthma): When I fill up my motorbike, I might get a bit wheezy because there are fumes coming out.

Vladamier: It was a concern while he was away, especially if he was going to an area in Spring where the grass is out, and all of those sorts of things. We just had to take the right precautions and pack two puffers in his bag instead of one in case he lost one or something like that.

Susan (has three children with asthma): She would have to sit inside and watch the fireworks, because if she went out anywhere near that sort of smoke she would just have an instant attack. Just little things like that, but she was excluded from some of those activities.

Lavinia and Geoff: For me, it means constantly planning ahead where we're going, what will be there, will we be able to cope with a situation if a situation arises. When we were holidaying, making sure we had power if we were camping - because earlier on we only used the pump, but these days it's different, we use a spacer.

Gemma (has asthma): If I go to a sleepover, mum will usually say, "Can you not sleep on the floor, can you ask for the bed or the couch?"

Susan: I realised they were starting to mix with kids who were smoking and that would trigger off their asthma. They were having lots and lots of sleepovers. They would go and hang out on cold nights on street corners. All the things that would trigger asthma were



there. But because they are so sociable, they didn't want their asthma to limit them. And it's not cool, you know going somewhere and just coughing yourself sick, so they would in fact often take their medication with them.