

# Asthma First Aid

## 1 Sit the person upright

- Be calm and reassuring
- Do not leave them alone



## 2 Give 4 separate puffs of blue/grey reliever puffer

- **Shake** puffer
- Put **1 puff** into spacer
- Take **4 breaths** from spacer



**Repeat** until **4 puffs** have been taken

**Remember: Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths**

OR Give 2 separate doses of a Bricanyl inhaler (age 6 & over) or a Symbicort inhaler (over 12).

## 3 Wait 4 minutes

- If there is no improvement, give **4 more separate puffs of blue/grey reliever** as above



(OR give 1 more dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort inhaler.)

## 4 If there is still no improvement call emergency assistance (DIAL 000)

- Say 'ambulance' and that someone is having an asthma attack
- Keep giving **4 separate puffs** every **4 minutes** until emergency assistance arrives



(OR 1 dose of Bricanyl or Symbicort every 4 minutes — up to 3 more doses of Symbicort).

### Call emergency assistance immediately (DIAL 000)

- If the person is not breathing
- If the person's asthma suddenly becomes worse, or is not improving
- If the person is having an asthma attack and a reliever is not available
- If you are not sure if it's asthma
- If the person is known to have Anaphylaxis - follow their Anaphylaxis Action Plan, then give Asthma First Aid.

**Blue/grey reliever medication is unlikely to harm, even if the person does not have asthma**

 **Asthma Australia**

Contact your local Asthma Foundation  
**1800 ASTHMA** (1800 278 462)  
[asthmaaustralia.org.au](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au)

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This brochure has been developed for the community by Asthma Foundation SA and the Government of South Australia Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

This brochure provides basic facts about:

- Prescribed burning
- Tips to stay safe and well if there is bushfire smoke in your area
- Useful contacts in the event of an emergency

Other resources are available at:  
[asthmaaustralia.org.au/resources](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au/resources)

The information contained within this brochure has been reviewed and endorsed by the Asthma Foundation of South Australia's Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee.

Asthma Foundation SA or Asthma Australia information does not replace professional medical advice. People should ask their doctor any questions about diagnosis or treatment.

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**Asthma**  
Foundation SA

## Asthma & Bushfire Smoke

**FREE CALL 1800 ASTHMA** (1800 278 462)  
To speak with an Asthma Educator

[asthmaaustralia.org.au](http://asthmaaustralia.org.au)   



**Government of South Australia**  
Department of Environment,  
Water and Natural Resources

# Prescribed Burning

Bushfire smoke and smoke from prescribed burning activities can be a major trigger for people with asthma and other respiratory conditions. It's important to be prepared and know how to respond if you are exposed to smoke.

Prescribed burning happens across South Australia, by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, to reduce bushfire risk, manage native plants, and protect biodiversity in our parks and reserves.

This generally takes place in autumn and spring, and only on certain days when conditions are suitable. In parts of the state, depending on seasonal conditions, burns can also happen at other times of the year. Presence of smoke from prescribed burns, generally, is in shorter duration than that of bushfires. To minimise the impact on people's health and wellbeing during prescribed burns, consideration is given to the amount of smoke that will be produced, and the direction and area it will cover.

Keep up-to-date on the prescribed burn schedule: [environment.sa.gov.au/firemanagement](http://environment.sa.gov.au/firemanagement)

Sign up to receive notification emails: [environment.sa.gov.au/firenews](http://environment.sa.gov.au/firenews)



# What do I do?

## Tips to stay safe and well if there is bushfire smoke in your area:

- Stay indoors when there is smoke (unless you are advised to evacuate); close all windows and doors and block air vents.
- If you have an air conditioner, use it - set it to recycle, at home and in the car.
- Avoid doing physical activity outdoors while smoke is around.
- Continue using your asthma preventer medication as prescribed by your doctor.
- Always have your asthma reliever medication (blue/grey puffer) with you, and use it as soon as you get symptoms - to prevent them from getting worse. If available, use a spacer as it helps get more medication into your lungs.
- If your asthma reliever medication isn't working, or needed 2-3 hourly or more, seek urgent medical advice by calling 000 for an ambulance.
- If you don't have your asthma medication with you, or you can't access your house to get it, your community pharmacy can provide emergency asthma medication even if you don't have a script or money to pay for it.
- Older people, children, and those working at the fire front are most at risk, so be aware and if you notice someone having trouble access help fast.
- If you don't have an Asthma Action Plan, or are unsure what to do in an asthma emergency, follow the Asthma First Aid procedure on the back of this brochure.

# Useful Contacts

<b>Ambulance</b>	<b>000</b>
<b>Asthma Assist</b> Asthma Foundation SA can provide information about managing your asthma during bushfires and prescribed burns.	<b>1800 ASTHMA</b> (1800 278 462)
<b>healthdirect Australia</b> If you have a health concern and you're not sure what to do, you can speak to a registered nurse 24 hours a day.	<b>1800 022 222</b>
<b>Country Fire Service</b> Check the SA bushfire status.	<b>1300 362 361</b>
<b>SA Bushfire Recovery</b> Financial assistance.	<b>1800 302 787</b>
<b>beyondblue</b> Offering counselling from trained health professionals 24 hours a day.	<b>1300 224 636</b>
<b>Emergency Triage Liaison Service</b> For people needing psychological support.	<b>13 14 65</b>
<b>Housing SA</b>	<b>13 12 99</b>

