Asthma
Asthma
A chronic condition that affects the small air passages of the lungs. It is caused by inflammation and tightening of airways, obstructing airflow, triggered by certain activities or substances, such as exercise, environmental irritants, and viral infections etc. Asthma symptoms are commonly, *wheeziness, a tight feeling chest, difficulty breathing and shortness of breath*. These factors lead to *stress, anxiety and embarrassment* in an asthma suffer.
Pathology of Asthma

- Normal airway
- Asthmatic airway
- Asthmatic airway during attack

- Relaxed smooth muscles
- Wall inflamed and thicken
- Air trapped in alveoli
- Tightened smooth muscles
Why is this a National Health Priority Area?

Asthma is a NHPA because people with asthma can experience reduced quality of life and require a range of health services from consultations in primary care.

In 2007-08, 19.9% aged 18 yrs and over had very high psychological distress compared with 11.1% of those without asthma.

It is estimated that, in 2010, asthma will be the 10th leading contributor to the overall burden of disease in Australia, accounting for 2.3% of the total number of DALYs. Currently 2 million people nation-wide experience asthma.
Biological Factors

Age (more prevalent in children & teenagers)
Genetics
Sex (more prevalent in women)
Behavioural factor

Tobacco smoking
Social Factor

Occupation
What health promotion initiatives have been put in place to improve this area?

The Asthma Cycle of Care (a national program that is based on the latest knowledge of how to effectively treat asthma).
Triple A (Adolescent Asthma Action).
Asthma Friendly Schools Programme (a national program that targets school students, staff and parents to help provide a safer school environment for children for asthma).

These initiatives are targeting the wider community in order to raise awareness for asthma, support asthma sufferers, and attempt to create safer environments for asthma sufferers.
What can be done to prevent/improve asthma?

There is currently no cure for asthma; the only way to improve the condition is through medication and asthma breathing courses.

Prevention of asthma is restricted, as it is often a genetic disorder, although factors such as smoking tobacco, and certain occupations can trigger, or even cause asthma. Therefore, a way to prevent asthma is to avoid smoking, and second-hand smoke. Although approximately 10% of all adult onset asthma is caused by occupational triggers (over 400 substances), not much can be do to prevent asthma, other than taking jobs where one is not exposed to a range of triggers.
Costs of the condition

**Direct:**
- Hospitalizations

**Indirect:**
- Medication
- People with asthma are more likely to take days off work, therefore receiving a lower income

**Intangible:**
- Death (400 Australians die annually due to asthma)
- Poor quality of life
Bibliography

- Health and human development textbook
- www.google.com
- aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=10737420159
Thanks for Caitlin Thompson for helping me in this PowerPoint presentation ..

Caitlin Thompson & Kimberlie Suniga