



MANAGING YOUR SEVERE EOSINOPHILIC ASTHMA

Lifestyle tips for managing your disease at home

We all want our homes to be lovely places to live, but for those of us with severe eosinophilic asthma, our homes also need to be healthy and practical, so that we can live in them with ease.

This brochure offers tips for managing severe eosinophilic asthma symptoms within your home. Our suggestions range from small adjustments you can make today, to bigger changes that may need planning and budgeting. We hope you find at least a couple of ideas that could work for you.



These lifestyle tips are divided into three sections to help you manage the symptoms of severe eosinophilic asthma in your home:

1

**CREATING A HEALTHY
AND PRACTICAL SPACE**



2

**FORMING HEALTHY AND
PRACTICAL HABITS AT HOME**



3

**CREATE A HEALTHY AND
PRACTICAL HOME ABROAD**

Creating a healthy and practical space

The following lifestyle tips are designed to help you manage the symptoms of your disease within your home. Creating a healthy and practical space at home could help limit the symptoms or triggers of your severe eosinophilic asthma.



Make it fit with your lifestyle

It is much easier to introduce a new habit if it doesn't involve a major upheaval of your routine. Instead, anchor any new behaviours to something you already do. For instance, if your goal is to walk more, setting time aside each day to go out for a walk can feel like an impossible commitment, particularly on those days when you're not feeling great.

Instead, try taking the opportunity to walk whenever you have the chance throughout your normal day. This could be much more manageable. A few examples? Get off the bus one stop earlier; leave the car at home for short journeys; walk around your home when you're on the telephone; or walk your children to school.

Create a comfortable space

We all need a comfortable space where we can do the things we enjoy, whether that's phoning a friend, reading a magazine, or doing some gentle exercise. It doesn't have to be an entire room. It could be a corner of the garden or your favourite armchair, for instance.

Add extra comfort by personalizing the space. You could separate it with a rug, screen, shelving or plants. Lighting can make a difference, too. Add some of your favourite things, such as photographs or books. Let people know this is where you come when you want some time to yourself.

Even if you live alone, it's important to have a spot where you feel able to rest and re-energize, particularly when you're having a difficult day.



Creating a healthy and practical space

Reduce asthma triggers

People with severe eosinophilic asthma do not typically have underlying allergies. Their asthma symptoms are not always affected by allergens such as pollen, pet dander and dust mites.

However, if you are someone who is affected by allergic and environmental triggers, it makes sense to minimize the triggers in your home. Choose artificial plants over real ones, get mould treated as soon as you spot it, keep your home well ventilated, send smokers outdoors and keep dust-gathering clutter to a minimum.

You may also wish to avoid aerosols and sprays, for both personal use and cleaning. Choose fragrance-free products and non-toxic paints. Clean with a damp cloth rather than dry dusters or chemical-laden cleaning products.

Ask your doctor for more information about asthma triggers.

Treat your bedroom like a sanctuary

There are certain adjustments you can make to your bedroom to encourage a better night's sleep.

Think of your bedroom as a comfortable sanctuary. It should be cool, dark and quiet to help you get a good night's sleep. Try to keep it reserved for relaxation and sleep only; if you associate it with work or watching TV, it may be harder to switch off at the end of the day. A phone by your bed may be handy but try to save it just for essential calls.

If possible, try to stick to the same bedtime and wake-up time, even on weekends. If you're disturbed by light or noise, consider investing in some blackout blinds, an eye mask and ear plugs. Make sure your bedding is comfortable and replace or professionally clean duvets and pillows every now and then to keep them fresh.



Forming healthy and practical habits at home

In addition to creating a healthy and practical living space, you can also utilize the lifestyle tips below to help form new healthy and practical habits within your home to further help manage your symptoms.

Check your sleep quality

Start winding down at least thirty minutes before you go to sleep. Disconnect from your electronic devices and practice quiet reading or close your eyes and listen to calming music. You can even try light stretching or yoga before settling in. Avoid eating too late in the day, and don't consume caffeine or alcohol too close to bedtime. Nothing is quite as refreshing as a good night's sleep, so experiment with different methods to see what works for you.

Introduce a replacement behaviour

It's much easier to break an old habit if you replace it with something new. The trick is to focus on that new, positive behaviour.

If you want to get into the habit of drinking less alcohol, for example, you could opt for one of the many nonalcoholic alternatives whenever you'd normally pour yourself a beer or glass of wine.



Forming healthy and practical habits at home

Organizing your home

Consider organizing your home in a healthy and practical way.

A simple example of how to do this includes having two sets of the items you use often—such as phone chargers, reading glasses and water bottles—and keeping one upstairs and another downstairs. This can save you several trips up and down the stairs each day.

You could also choose lightweight bedding and microfibre towels, to save struggling with heavy wash loads on laundry days. Consider a lightweight vacuum cleaner too, such as one of the cordless options available.

If you're planning home renovations, think about ways to save yourself from too much crouching, bending and lifting. You might choose easy-access drawers instead of under-the-counter cupboards, or stacking a tumble dryer on top of a washing machine instead of next to it.

Use technology to keep you connected

Staying connected to friends and family is important for our general wellbeing. When you don't feel up to socializing in person, you can stay in touch with video calls from the comfort of home.

Consider investing in a portable device to make calls from, such as a tablet or smartphone. If you're not sure how to get started, download a communication tool such as Skype or Zoom and follow the online tutorials to learn how to use them. Or just ask a tech-savvy friend for help.

Another quick tip? Identify the best spot in your home to take video calls, with good Wi-Fi, so you can make sure you're comfortably set up in advance.



Create a healthy and practical home abroad

Sometimes life leads us to faraway places. Whether for work or pleasure, you may have concerns if you will be able to manage your asthma symptoms when required to travel. The lifestyle tips below may help.

Make your vacation feel like home

This checklist of helpful features can assist you in choosing a destination.

An easy layout

By choosing accommodation that's easy to get around, you can save your energy for the fun stuff. Think single-story lodges, hotels with elevators, resorts with carts to rent or romantic cabins at the bottom rather than the top of hills. Accommodation like this will make your trip easier.

Decent parking

Who wants to arrive at their accommodation after a long drive to find the nearest parking spot is virtually in the next town? No one! Think of the suitcases, the food shopping, the teenagers. It is much easier to get them in and out of the car at the front door.

A proper bed

Sofa beds, camp beds, inflatable beds, mattresses on the floor, squeezing in with the kids—for most people these aren't ideal options. Your sleep is important, and you deserve a decent bed. If it means you'll sleep well on vacation and if space allows, take your own duvet and pillows.

Nonsmoking options

Some countries still allow smoking in public areas or bedrooms. Cigarette smoke can stay in a room for up to two and a half hours. If you are aware that this may affect your symptoms, you may prefer to book a nonsmoking hotel room or accommodation.



Create a healthy and practical home abroad

Pet-free zones

Some people with severe eosinophilic asthma may find that pet allergens trigger their symptoms. Pet allergens can stay in carpets and furniture for some time, so look for accommodations with a “no pets” policy, and check in advance that no animals may have been there recently.

Medical assistance nearby

Of course, we all hope that no one needs medical attention on vacation, but if you’d find it reassuring to know that support is nearby, put it on your list of must-haves. Choose a place within close range of a local medical centre or hospital. Some hotels and resorts may even have an on-call doctor.

