

Thunderstorm Asthma

WHAT IS THUNDERSTORM ASTHMA?

Rapid spikes in asthma attacks associated with thunderstorm events during high pollen seasons



WHAT HAPPENS?

1

Whole pollen grains (e.g. rye grass) taken up into storm clouds

2

Moisture bursts pollen grains into small particles

3

Pollen particles spread by dry outflow of air in front of storm

Note: Other aero-allergens have also caused thunderstorm asthma events in other areas

CAN CAUSE:

- Severe asthma symptoms
- Hospital attendance / admissions
- Death

WHO IS AFFECTED BY THUNDERSTORM ASTHMA?

Anyone can be affected, even people without an asthma diagnosis

POPULATIONS MOST AT RISK



People with asthma not prescribed or taking controller medication



People with pollen allergy and/or hay fever

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

TO REDUCE RISK

- Maintain asthma control with regular use of controller medication (consider use during pollen season if not indicated year-round)
- Effective allergic rhinitis management including intranasal corticosteroids through pollen season
- Develop knowledge of asthma first aid
- Update written asthma action plan including thunderstorm asthma advice

DURING THUNDERSTORMS



- Carry reliever inhaler throughout grass pollen season
- Stay indoors with windows closed during storms
- **If you have symptoms, seek immediate medical care and seek medical advice**