

THE DISCONTENT OF OUR WINTER

the copper motifs Anthony cuts for her, dreaming up new recipes for the wood-fired oven out the back.

Anthony says he knows when the oven is at the perfect temperature. You reach out your hand towards the gaping mouth, and if it sings the hairs on your arm, it's right to go. He says pizza ovens are a tricky business. This one was built by experts from Araluen, but the real secret to success is the skull cap of copper wire wound tightly around the dome, under the final layer of render.

'It's like Brunelleschi's Dome' I say. 'The cupola of the cathedral of Santa Maria Del Fiore in Florence, built in Cosimo de Medici's time. Brunelleschi was a goldsmith and architect and all-round renaissance man. It was all very top secret. Lots of intrigue and jostling with Ghiberti. The dome was designed with two concentric shells, the inner shell nested inside a wider, taller dome. To counteract hoop stress, he bound the walls with tension rings, like the hoops on a barrel. Just like the pizza oven.'

I wonder if the design of the dome came to Brunelleschi when he was sitting at home, in the winter dark, during one of the many times the plague swept through Florence in the 15th century.

On Monday morning I crunch over the frost to the car and drive out to Hereford Hall, for the first time since restrictions have been relaxed. There are by-election road works on the Cooma Road, and I pull up for a traffic controller, breathing steam from under his beanie, and watch a machine munch a Ribbon Gum and spit out the chips.

On the radio, callers ring in with hints and tips for surviving lockdown. 'Maybe we've got this the wrong way around' a woman says. 'We're thinking the virus is the problem and that people are going to solve it. But maybe we humans are the virus — and Covid-19 is the solution'.

This is not a cheerful thought, idling on a slippery verge on a cold winter's morning. I flick stations.

A little further down the road, a farmer brings up the rear of a herd of Black Angus cattle as they move camp, their daggy rears betraying recent days feeding on over-rich pasture. The cattle mosey along the road, with no sense of urgency, occasionally picking up speed to greet kinsfolk in the paddocks on either side of the road, nuzzling noses and gently murmuring to each other.

And, just like that, the fog lifts.
Suddenly there is sunshine —
piercing slats of sun — segmenting
the vast, aviation-fuel-free sky.

I find myself realising that while some people are itching for borders to reopen, I am secretly harbouring the vain hope that the Kings Highway might close again, and that this winter of hibernation will last just long enough for a general reset. Because surely, like all the other pandemics over time, this one will pass. And, like the other pandemics, we will gravitate back to the old ways of living, suppress the memories of the horrors, downplay the inequities of impact and move on. Businesses will open again, and the sky will muddy with sepia fumes like an overmixed artist palette. We will be left with only a new injection of urban mythology as a reminder. (A pomade of orange, studded with cloves; a prophylactic lemon juice tea every morning; an injection of the American President's bleach...)

And the memory of the 2020 winter of the crystal-clear skies.

For good control of asthma, you need:

- Medicines – taken the right way, at the right time (get your inhaler technique checked)
- Regular medical visits for check-ups and to learn more about living with asthma
- An action plan, so you know exactly what to do when symptoms happen (this can be increasing medication, take a different medication, when to seek help)

The best way to find out if you have good control of your asthma is to answer the following questions:

1. In the past 4 weeks, how often did your asthma prevent you from getting as much done at work, school or at home?
 - 🍏 All of the time 1 point
 - 🍏 Most of the time 2 points
 - 🍏 Some of the time 3 points
 - 🍏 A little of the time 4 points
 - 🍏 Not at all 5 points
2. During the past 4 weeks, how often have you had shortness of breath?
 - 🍏 More than once a day 1 point
 - 🍏 Once a day 2 points
 - 🍏 3 to 6 times a week 3 points
 - 🍏 Once or twice a week 4 points
 - 🍏 Not at all 5 points
3. During the past 4 weeks, how often did your asthma symptoms (wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath, chest

ASTHMA: do you have control?

Bente Hart

In the past we have always talked about mild, moderate and severe asthma. This is no longer the case. We now talk about how well controlled your asthma is. You can have what was called mild asthma but if this is poorly controlled that is actually worse than having what was termed severe asthma but that is well controlled. So the severity is not the issue as much as to how well you control your condition. It is important to be aware that there is no cure for asthma, but it can usually be well controlled. Asthma is a condition where you constantly have some degree of inflammation in your lungs that makes your breathing less efficient and restricted. For many people living with Asthma they do not feel this inflammation or restriction in their daily life, but that does not mean it is not there.

BREATHE EASIER

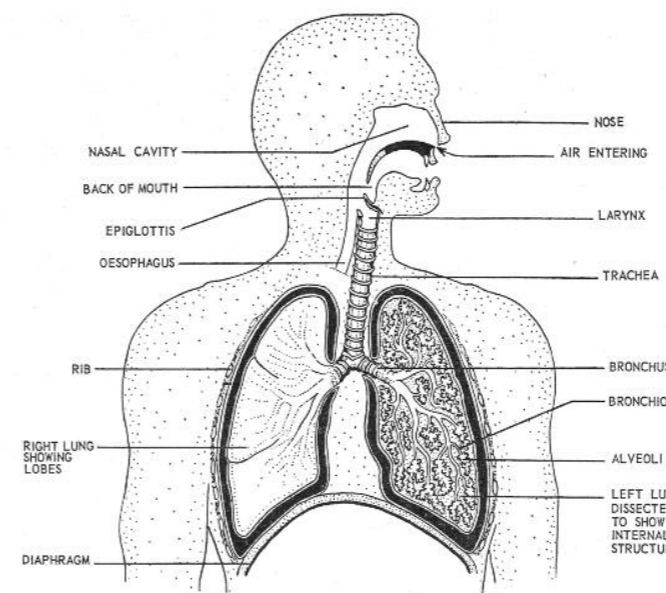


Figure 28.12 Human breathing system

to persons with evidence of a medically diagnosed lung condition (ei. you receive preventer medication from the pharmacy); to persons with a record of previous supply from the pharmacist; and supply must be limited to one primary pack of salbutamol per person. Hence your pharmacist will ask more questions of you now when you want to buy a reliever.

Preventers:

(also known as controller or anti-inflammatory treatment) These are asthma medicines to take regularly, every day, to prevent asthma symptoms and flare-ups. Preventers help soothe the irritation or inflammation inside the lungs. Most preventer medicines are inhaled through an inhaler or puffer. There is also one type of preventer medicine that is a tablet.

When it comes to control of asthma it is important to be aware that if you need to take reliever medicine often, it means you don't have good asthma control. You could be at risk of a serious asthma attack. Get an asthma check-up if you use reliever more than twice a week for symptoms. The latest evidence points towards that if you overuse your reliever this increases your risk of flare-ups and asthma-related complications as this does not treat the inflammation of the lungs. Hence it is important to use your preventer regularly. Recently a combination medication of both a reliever and a preventer was approved for mild asthma to be used on an as needed basis as a reliever. Using this instead of the plain reliever may be a better strategy for many people with mild asthma as it deals both with the shortness of breath and the inflammation that is in the lungs.

It is also important to know how to use your inhalers correctly especially if you have used them for a long time as you may over time have missed some key points. So have your technique checked to make sure you get the most from your inhaler this can be done by your doctor or pharmacist. So take control of your asthma – do not let it control you.

A good place for more information are these websites:

- National Asthma Council Australia: <https://www.nationalasthma.org.au/>
- This website has some great videos of how to use all kinds of inhalers. They also have a good Brochure called 'My Asthma Guide'.
- Asthma Australia: <https://asthma.org.au/about-asthma/live-with-asthma/>

tightness or pain) wake you up at night or earlier than usual in the morning?

- 🍏 4 or more times a week 1 point
- 🍏 2 to 3 nights a week 2 points
- 🍏 1 night a week 3 points
- 🍏 Less than 1 night a week 4 points
- 🍏 Not at all 5 points

4. During the past 4 weeks, how often have you used your reliever medication (such as salbutamol)?

- 🍏 3 or more times a day 1 point
- 🍏 1 or 2 times per day 2 points
- 🍏 2 or 3 times per week 3 points
- 🍏 Once a week or less 4 points
- 🍏 Not at all 5 points

5. How would you rate your asthma control during the past four weeks?

- 🍏 Not controlled 1 point
- 🍏 Poorly controlled 2 points
- 🍏 Somewhat controlled 3 points
- 🍏 Well controlled 4 points
- 🍏 Completely controlled 5 points

If you have a result of 20-25 points your asthma management is on target and controlled. A score under 19 should make you review how well your asthma is managed (read "see your doctor!") **How good is your control?**

There are two main types of asthma medication Relievers and Preventers (now also called anti-inflammatory treatment or controllers). As a general these medications are inhaled into the lungs.

Relievers:

These are inhaled medication to take when asthma symptoms occurs. Everyone who has asthma needs a reliever inhaler (e.g. 'puffer') to use whenever they have asthma symptoms. Some people also need to take their reliever before exercise. In Australia, most relievers are available from pharmacies without a prescription – it is important to note that from 24 March 2020 it became illegal for a pharmacist to supply a over the counter salbutamol inhaler, other than

Capital Chemist
Braidwood

NEW Opening hours:
Mon – Fri: 8am – 5pm
Saturday: 9am -12.30pm

SERVICES AVAILABLE

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- Dose Administration Aids (Webster Packs)
- NDSS Access Point for diabetes supplies
- Leave of Absence & Carer's Leave Certificates with pharmacist consultation
- Return of Unwanted Medicines
- Pharmacist administered vaccinations
- Blood pressure monitoring
- In-Pharmacy Medicine Review – Development of a Best Possible Medicine list
- Home Medicines Review on referral from your doctor

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