

# Protect yourself from Thunderstorm Asthma

## Medical

Thunderstorm asthma is when asthma symptoms are caused by ryegrass pollen allergy during springtime thunderstorms. Thunderstorm asthma can happen suddenly to people in spring or summer when there is a lot of grass pollen in the air and the weather is stormy.

### Who gets thunderstorm asthma?

You could get thunderstorm asthma if you are outside in gusty winds just before a thunderstorm on a day when there is a lot of pollen in the air AND you are allergic to ryegrass pollen.

This includes:

- people with asthma whose symptoms get worse in springtime
- people with asthma who are allergic to grass pollen
- people with asthma who get hay fever in springtime
- people with springtime hay fever, even if they have not been told they have asthma.

This means people with asthma and springtime hay fever need extra protection to avoid thunderstorm asthma if they are in a region with a lot of grass pollen.

### How to stay safe

Keep taking your asthma medicines prescribed by your doctor. Most adults and adolescents with asthma need more protection than just a blue/grey puffer. Medicines that contain inhaled corticosteroids help protect people from severe asthma attacks. Australian research shows that these kinds of asthma treatments might also protect you from severe thunderstorm asthma.

Ask your doctor to check your asthma. Make sure you have a written asthma action plan that is up to date. If not, ask your doctor to write one.

During Spring and Summer, always carry your reliever inhaler. Stay up to date with pollen counts and weather forecasts during Spring and early Summer so you know if a storm is coming.

Just before and during storms with wind gusts, get inside a building or car with the windows shut and the air conditioner switched to recirculate/recycled.

To learn more visit: [www.nationalasthma.org.au/living-with-asthma/resources/patients-carers/factsheets/thunderstorm-asthma](http://www.nationalasthma.org.au/living-with-asthma/resources/patients-carers/factsheets/thunderstorm-asthma)

**To book a medical appointment call**



**1300 234 263** (select option 1)

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