

# Asthma and allergies

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Science  
Education



Teachers' guidance for use with 8-11 year-olds



The activities in Asthma and allergies can be adapted for use with younger children, from eight years of age, **with close adult supervision**. As with any written instructions, they will need a hand with some of the vocabulary depending on age and reading ability.

The material in Asthma and allergies is highly relevant to this age group, with the rising incidence of childhood asthma and food allergies.

As with any topic relating to health, sensitivity is important. It is likely that your class will include one or two children with asthma and several with food intolerances and allergies.

Asthma and other allergies have become so commonplace that students who suffer from it are unlikely to feel stigmatised. If anything they are likely to be happy to talk about their allergy, what triggers it and the steps they take to manage it. All the same, someone in the class might be the victim of teasing or even bullying, so be vigilant and take care not to make a student uncomfortable by putting them on the spot. As a rule, it's better to let students volunteer information about any medical condition than to ask them directly.

## Lab activity teaching notes

Lab activity 1 (House dust mites) requires access to some decent quality compound light microscopes. There are microscopes that can be easily connected to a data projector for a class demonstration – you may be able to borrow one from a secondary/high school. Alternatively there are plenty of online images of house dust mites if you want to show these to your class and discuss the role of house dust mites as an asthma trigger.

All of the other Lab activities in Asthma and allergies can be adapted to use safely with younger children. Depending on the age and ability of your students, you'll need to simplify some of the vocabulary but the concepts should be accessible to most learners. You may prefer to demonstrate the peak flow measurement activity if you don't have enough meters to go round.

## Independent learning teaching notes

The Independent learning sheets are designed for older students, although the Asthma sheet could be used by more able 10-11 year-olds.

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How about running an Allergy Awareness campaign?

Your students could research, prepare and deliver a simple Allergy Awareness campaign at your school. There are plenty of resources online to support this, including free publications for school such as posters and leaflets.

They could work together to prepare a piece in the school newsletter, or even a short presentation in an assembly. You'll get plenty of support from your head teacher and parents – they will all know children who are affected by hay fever, asthma or food allergies.