



Asthma and Allergies

The Fact Sheet – Water and Health

Asthma and allergies are often brought down to air pollutants and toxins in the home, sometimes this overlooks the part that ordinary tap water can play in making asthma and allergies worse.

CHLORINE

Carefully choosing the right source for your drinking water might be a good idea if you or a family member has asthma and allergies. A Belgian study recently concluded that chlorine, a common chemical added to water to help kill bacteria, could be making asthma in children worse. Fumes from chlorine in pools, and even in the shower, could trigger an attack for some people with asthma and allergies. Those who suffer from asthma and allergies are often sensitive to gases that are produced when chlorine sanitizes bacteria in sweat or urine. These gases can build up in an enclosed shower, irritating the lungs of children and adults who have asthma and allergies.

FLUORIDE

Other chemicals in drinking water can affect people with asthma and allergies. Fluoride is added to most municipal water supplies to help fight tooth decay in children. But for some people with asthma and allergies, fluoride can compromise their health. Allergists for decades have known that documented cases exist of both adults and children with asthma and allergies who have suffered severe reactions to fluoride. In 1967, the Annals of Allergy published a study finding infants, children and one adult who had allergic skin reactions and asthma attacks after being exposed to tap water treated with fluoride. Households with members who have asthma and allergies can filter their tap water with reverse osmosis filtration to eliminate chlorine and fluoride from their water.

DEHYDRATION

Dehydration could play a significant role in asthma and allergies. A recent study found that lack of water vapour in the lungs causes the airways to constrict and for the asthmatic's lungs to produce mucus, the two factors that cause an asthma attack. The study recommends that people with asthma drink at least 2 to 3 litres of water every day, along with a pinch of salt, and to avoid caffeine. This is because salt regulates water in the body and caffeine robs the body of needed water.

Interestingly enough, folk remedies for asthma and allergies bear out the water theory as well. Home cures include drinking hot water and inhaling steam from a bowl or kettle.

People with asthma and allergies can control their home environment even more by filtering chlorine and fluoride out of their tap water, allowing everyone to breathe easier.

For advice call 020 8539 4707