

Coughs, Colds and Asthma

It's that time of year again when we spend more time inside than outside. The weather is probably **foggy**, **damp** and uninviting. This all means that the season for colds, coughs and flu has started.

For some it is just a little **bothersome**, but for asthmatic patients it means a time of year when the upper airways may become **clogged** with **phlegm**, and the lungs are working overtime to relieve the problems of **wheezing**, shortness of breath, and coughing. The different kinds of asthma are: **adult-**

onset, allergic, asthma-COPD overlap, **exercise-induced bronchoconstriction**, non-allergic, and occupational asthma. Aside from genetic **predisposition**, the environment also plays a role in triggering asthma. Indoor allergens such as house dust mites and **pet dander**, outdoor allergens such as pollen and **mould**, tobacco

smoke, chemical irritants, and air pollution are all considered to be asthma triggers.

PTA: Guten Tag.

Male customer: Do you speak English?

Yes, a little. How may I help you?

I have a prescription for an inhaler. A few weeks ago I had a **bout of flu**, not Covid-19, thank goodness. I recovered from the flu, but I have had a persistent cough, and wheezing and breathing problems since then.

Oh, that's unpleasant. Did your doctor carry out any tests?

Yes, I had various blood tests, and she did a spirometry test to find out my lung function. Okay, I'm 63 years-old and not as fit as I was, but she discovered that my lung function is reduced. It probably wasn't even from the flu!

I see she has prescribed a flumetason and salmeterol medication. Have you ever used this before?

No, I used to take salbutamol I haven't needed taken anything since I was in my teens.

Salbutamol is used as a rescue spray. This one contains a substance like the cortisone in the body. Cortisone will help reduce the **inflammation** causing your cough. The other **active ingredient**, salmeterol, will help to control your wheezing, shortness of breath, and coughing.

What about my cough?

Your cough should improve when you use the inhaler regularly.

How do I take this inhaler?

You see this part here, place your thumb here and push down until you hear a click. A powder with the active ingredients is released from the roll of dosages inside the disc. Then enclose the mouth-piece completely with your lips and take a long deep breath. Hold it for about ten seconds and slowly exhale through slightly opened lips.

Sounds easy.

Also make sure that you rinse your mouth with water after use.

Why?

To prevent **oral thrush**, one of the side effects of using such inhalers.

Okay, I'll keep that in mind. Thank you for your help.

No problem, it's what we do! You should see some improvement when you use the inhaler regularly.

Bye, bye.

Goodbye.

*Catherine Croghan,
Lecturer in English and
native speaker*

VOCABULARY

cough	Husten
colds	Erkältungen
foggy	neblig
damp	feucht
bothersome	lästig
clogged	verstopft
phlegm	Schleim
wheezing	Pfeifatmung
adult-onset	mit Beginn im Erwachsenenalter
exercise-induced	anstrengungsinduziert
bronchoconstriction	Bronchialverengung
predisposition	Veranlagung
pet dander	Haut- oder Haarschuppen von Haustieren
mould	Schimmel
bout of flu	Grippeanflug
inflammation	Entzündung
active ingredient	Wirkstoff
oral thrush	Mundsoor, orale Candidiasis