



Appendix A: Lifestyle and Environmental Modifications

Consider the following triggers and mitigation strategies when developing a patient's treatment plan:

Allergens

- Year-long: consider common home allergens (e.g., pets, mold, dust mites), refer to allergist for testing and management – remove allergen(s) if possible.
- Seasonal: consider seasonal outdoor allergens (e.g., grass, trees, weeds), refer to allergist for testing and management – minimize exposure to allergen/ allergy shots.

Food/Sulfites

- Symptoms after eating shrimp and/or drinking beer or wine – consider sulfite allergies – allergen avoidance

Work

- Consider occupational allergens (see Table 1. Examples of occupational exposures that can contribute to asthma) – consider workplace adjustments/change.

Exercise

- Encourage exercise and SABA PRN pre exercise to reduce exercise induced symptoms.

Medication

- Symptoms after taking medication – consider common medications (e.g., beta-blockers including ophthalmic preparations, ASA, NSAIDs, and ACE-Inhibitors) – stop medication and prescribe an alternative.

Tobacco smoke

- Identify first, second and third hand smoke sources – remove from living areas if possible.
- If patient smokes discuss their willingness to quit (discuss at every visit until patient is willing to try quitting smoking) – provide resources to patients who want to quit smoking, see *Physician and Patient Resources*.

Irritants

- Consider other irritants, such as wood-burning stove/fireplace, fragrances, cleaners, painting, air pollution – remove/avoid allergens.

Vaccinations

- Recommend annual influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations for all patients with asthma.

Table 1. Examples of occupational exposures that can contribute to asthma

Jobs at risk	Possible causative agent
Car paint spraying	Isocyanates
Laboratory work	Small animals
Joinery	Hard woods
Electronics, soldering	Colophony
Bakery, farming	Grain, flour improver
Healthcare workers	Glutaraldehyde
Heavy manual work	Exercise
Farming	Mouldy hay

Source: Table adapted from Chambers R, Moore S, Parker G, et al. Occupational Health Matters in General Practice. 2001. Radcliffe Medical Press Ltd. Abingdon, Oxon: UK. 24-25. (Chapter: The relationship between work and health).