



Speaking from Experience Young People & Asthma

Transcript for chapter 3 of 8: Management & medication

Tamara – My way of managing my asthma is basically knowing what my body can and cannot do, so knowing my limits. If I know that I have a cold, I don't go and run a marathon – not that I run marathons. Basically, I just recognise those symptoms before they turn into anything. Even if I don't feel asthmatic at the time, I might just have a puff to be on the safe side.

Michelle – I take preventative medication to help it, so that I have less attacks.

Emily – I have that puffer, the ventolin puffer. If I have really bad attacks, I go on steroids and preventers and things like that.

Zeke – I take the preventer twice a day.

Emily – I play netball twice per week. So, before I play I have three puffs. If I have an asthma attack, sort of thing, I have to have it every few hours; three puffs every few hours, or when needed.

Katrina – I just take it [medication], mostly with my sport.

Ben – Taking my preventers and relievers on a regular basis means that I can do sport all the time. It [medication] helps me out with it 100%, and helps me to do what I do every day.

Tamara – Having them there is the main thing, and trying to remember that is also a concern sometimes. As long as I've got them, I'm usually pretty good.

Emily – Usually I have it next to my bed, because I am a nocturnal asthmatic. I also have it in bags, like school bags, hand bags, my mum has one in her hand bag – in case I have one [asthma attack] at sport.

Zeke – If I forget to change the puffer into the one bag, I can just easily remember that the school has one. So, I can just ask out the front counter if I can have a puffer.

Michelle – There's no worse feeling than feeling tightness in your chest, or wheezing, or feeling an asthma attack coming on and knowing that you can't stop it.

Tamara – I've been on the same type of medication for the whole time that I have had asthma and, to be honest, I don't think I've ever noticed that I've had side-effects. However, I think, since now that I'm a nurse and I've read about and had to learn about the side-effects of medication and asthma, I think I possibly had experienced some of them but I hadn't really associated them being in terms of my medication, such as the tremors and that sort of thing. It's definitely good to be mindful of them, if you are taking a medication. If you have to change medication, I think it's important to know and be mindful of them.

Emily – Sometimes with ventolin, if I have it too much then I do start to get shaky.



Michelle – The most important side-effect for me, of the preventative medication, is I can't gain weight. I know that's different to some girls, because they always want to lose weight and look thinner, whereas for sport and for me, it's more important for me to gain weight and I just can't do that.

Katrina – I sometimes go to the doctor for check-ups for asthma.

Zeke – When I was younger, I used to live with my Nan. She used to take me to the hospital all the time when I had asthma problems.

Emily - I have been hospitalised a few times for my asthma when I was younger. Because I'm a nocturnal asthmatic, it would be during the night time, and I would cough so much and sometimes I would start to vomit. So, mum or dad would take me to the hospital and they would give me tablets and special medication to open up my airways.

Michelle – You know you're at a point where you need to go to hospital when ventolin doesn't do the trick anymore. Ventolin is usually like this magic wand and you can just fix your asthma immediately. When ventolin doesn't have that affect on you know that you need to go to hospital.

Emily – It's pretty scary. You go there and get taken to a hospital bed, and doctors and nurses come in and check on you, it's quite scary, and they give you medication. At that age, I didn't really know what was happening, so it was quite scary. I had my parents there, so they helped me.

Ben – My mum always knows what to do, pretty much, so she helps me with asthma. It hasn't been as bad that I've had to go into hospital for it, but I have seen doctors the next day to give me nebulisers and things that go over your face, as a mask, and that helps.

Michelle – I think it's made me become independent. It's made me realise that this is something that I do need to take care of; otherwise it will get the better of me. I do need to take responsibility for it now. Mum and dad can't do everything for me. So, I think that asthma has given me the chance to prove that I can take care of myself.

Tamara – Trying to prevent anything from happening, before it happens – and obviously prevention is a much better way of managing things; rather than trying to stop something when it's happening. I guess that's my way of managing it, and knowing my body.

Ben – Yeah, you learn to manage it and keep it under control.

Michelle – If I do take my ventolin, everything will be fine. And if I do take my preventative medication, everything will be okay. So, as long as I'm responsible about it, then my asthma is managed.