



Speaking from Experience Asthma in Childhood

Transcript for chapter 4 of 12: Doctors and hospitals

Paul, Vicky and daughter Michelle (who has asthma): The GP has been good. He has been very willing and happy to answer our questions. But sometimes you're not sure that he is as up-to-date as maybe a specialist respiratory physician would be.

Marilyn (has three sons with asthma): I think it's essential to have a good rapport with a General Practitioner. I think it's so important that you don't hop from one doctor to another, and stay with one that you're happy with, so that you not only have a rapport with him but the doctor also builds up a rapport with your child. I really notice that asthma is such a changing condition, even in my own children, that asthma will present itself quite differently from one attack to another. Unless that same doctor is seeing your child, it's often difficult to actually explain what happened in the last attack. So I thought that was a central part of the management of their asthma.

Paul, Vicky and daughter Michelle: This one day the nebuliser was on and it just didn't work. We then gave her another lot, and again no response. We took her back to a doctor. Unfortunately it was a different doctor to the one that we normally saw, and he added a few more medicines to the nebuliser that had no effect. And he told me to take her home and put her to bed. I felt uncomfortable with that because she was obviously very unwell. She was so lethargic – keeping in mind she was under three and she was still having sleep, and it was starting to be lunch time and sleep time. I felt very uncomfortable with the way she was and I didn't want to put her back to bed. So I spoke with my mother and Paul, and said maybe I should take her to the hospital. Which we did, and she lost consciousness as we were walking in with her into the casualty. They came and I explained that I thought that she was having an asthma attack that was not resolving. They took her oxygen level, and it was down at 82, and so we had doctors come from all sorts of places and they were very quick. I remember there were two or three doctors – one was giving her oxygen, and others were doing other things with her. They explained to me after that that she would have to be admitted and she would be there for a day or two.

Vladamier (has a son with asthma): What I like about our doctor is the fact that if she can't handle it, she will pass you straight onto someone who can. And she'll track it. It's important to go back, even after you've been to wherever you've been, whether that be a specialist or wherever – to go back to your doctor, so they can keep a track of the total picture.

Paul, Vicky and daughter Michelle: I think just about every time we've taken one of our kids to the hospital I've sort of had doubts as to whether or not we're over-reacting. But at the same time, every time we've taken them it has been worthwhile and necessary.

Lavinia and Geoff (have two daughters with asthma): Sometimes, usually around November, we end up in a bit of dilemma and a rush to the hospital, and then a good old dose of oral steroids to get her over it. Although we've managed to omit that this year, which has been nice.



Paul, Vicky and daughter Michelle: She was obviously exceptionally unwell. You only had to see her on the oxygen and the atrovent, and everything else that they were giving her... and the *prednisolone*... and how quickly she did usually resolve after she had been given the medication.