

Cost Effectiveness/Yield/Medical Economics
Paper Bag Breathing

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Paper bag breathing is very useful in patients having hysterical dyspnoea, persistent hiccups, or severe aerophagy syndrome. Surprisingly, modern textbooks

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talk of giving such patients oxygen. Since I have an oxygen concentrator, I have tried this alternative treatment off and on in my clinic. Although the psychological impact of giving oxygen to such hysterical patients should be more, I find that paper bag breathing brings about better relief, though the results are not 100%.

RHINITIS AS PREDICTOR OF ADULT-ONSET ASTHMA

A large proportion of people with asthma have symptoms of rhinitis either attributable to allergic sensitisation or to viral infections. It is hard to know whether sneezing leads to wheezing or whether wheezing and sneezing are part of the same process. However, several studies indicate that rhinitis can precede new onset of asthma.

The idea that allergic rhinitis could cause asthma raises the possibility of preventing asthma by preventing atopic sensitisation, which could in turn prevent allergic rhinitis. The potential of subcutaneous and sublingual immunotherapy for asthma prevention in children with allergic rhinitis has been investigated in two open studies.

Even if the long-term preventive effect of immuno-therapy is still unknown, immunotherapy in patients with allergic rhinitis can improve nasal symptom scores and reduce airway responsiveness and therefore help reduce asthma burden. By contrast, treatment of nasal symptoms with topical steroids or leukotriene antagonists, because they are symptomatic rather than immunomodulatory, will probably have *no* role in the secondary prevention of asthma. Therefore a cure of rhinitis would prevent only some cases of new-onset asthma.

Erika von Mutius, *The Lancet*, 2008; 372 : 1012-13.