

The CHAIR: I understand that the percentages of Australian children with asthma problems is higher than in other nations for some reason. Dr NASSAR: That is correct. The CHAIR: Could you provide further evidence to us in that area, regarding that particular fact? Dr NASSAR: Yes, I would be happy to

In response to the question taken on notice, there appears to be no known reason as to why there is a higher incidence of asthma in Australian children compared to the rest of the world. I have provided a reference from a longitudinal study which is published on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. It suggests some of the risk factors in developing asthma for children. Of note is the fact that both environmental and genetic factors are listed first. Exposure to environmental air pollution in genetically susceptible children is thought to be a risk factor for the development of asthma and other illnesses.

Asthma in Australian children: findings from Growing Up in Australia, the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/chronic-respiratory-conditions/asthma-in-australian-children-findings-from-growi/contents/table-of-contents>

Childhood asthma is the result of an interaction between genetics and environmental exposures. The incidence of asthma during later childhood is commonly associated with a family history of atopy. Often eczema, which is also associated with atopy, precedes the development of asthma. Other factors which have been shown to be linked to childhood asthma include pet ownership, number of siblings, attendance at day care, tobacco smoke exposure, socioeconomic status, remoteness of residence and Indigenous status.