

ASTHMA



STRAW CHALLENGE

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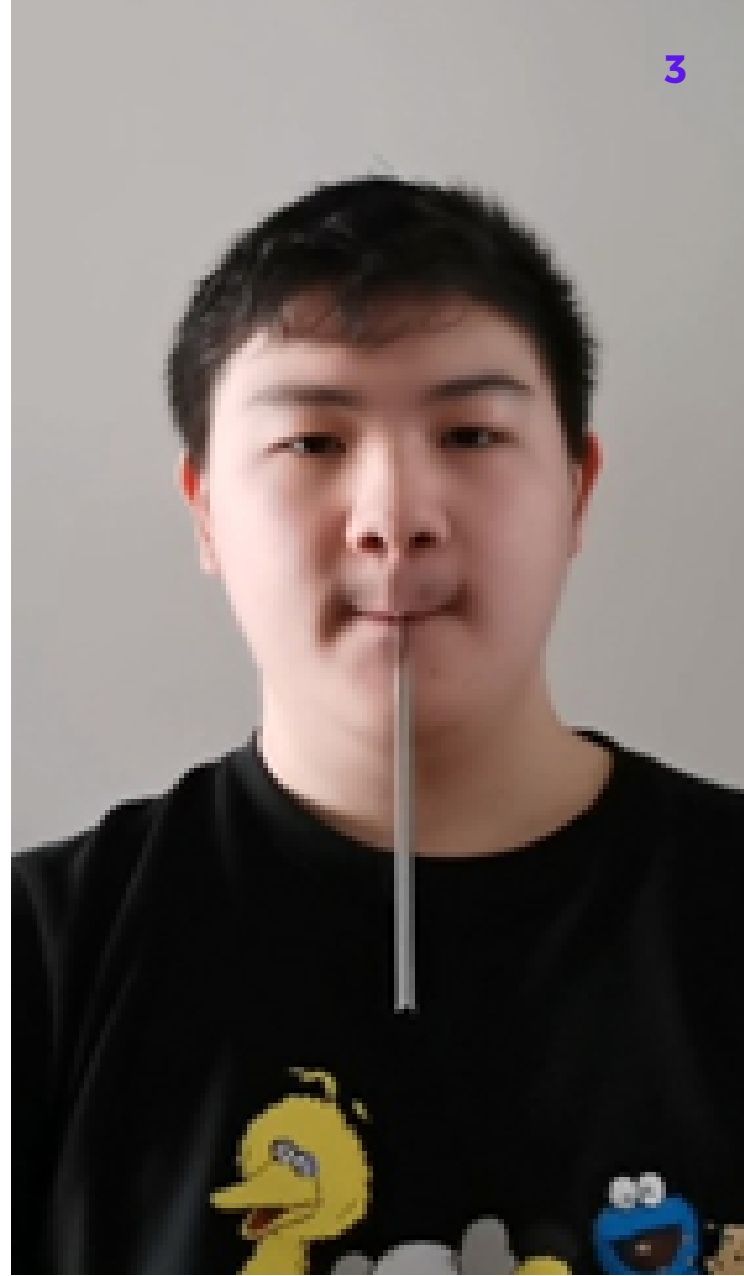
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In conjunction with World Asthma Day, I attempted the Asthma Straw Challenge. This challenge will allow people who are not suffering from asthma to experience what it feels like to have asthma.

During the challenge, I had to breathe through the straw for 15 seconds. I was not allowed to breathe from my nose but only from my mouth through the straw. I used a stopwatch to time myself and I also recorded myself doing the challenge.

"It was suffocating and I started to feel dizzy."



DARREN PAN YI REN, 15

I have never had any friends or family members with asthma, so, I could not predict what it would feel like. After the first breath, everything seemed normal, but as I progressed into the challenge, breathing was very difficult. It was suffocating and I started feel dizzy 10 seconds into the challenge. After 15 seconds, I was so relieved to breathe without the straw.



"I took a deep breath to get enough oxygen into my lungs, however still felt unsettled."

KYRA KANEISHIA, 17

Personally, I don't have asthma, but I do feel for those who do. I was put to a challenge to breathe through a straw for as long as I could and explain how I felt after. I remember while breathing into the straw, my heart palpitated, and my eyes tried to close a few times. I could barely make up my words after.

So, I took a deep breath to get enough oxygen into my lungs, however still felt unsettled. I now understand what it feels like to have asthma. My mind couldn't process the fact that it wasn't getting enough oxygen. But eventually, it hit me, and I removed the straw almost instantly.

*"I could
feel
tightness
in my
chest."*

BOEY JING XUAN, 17

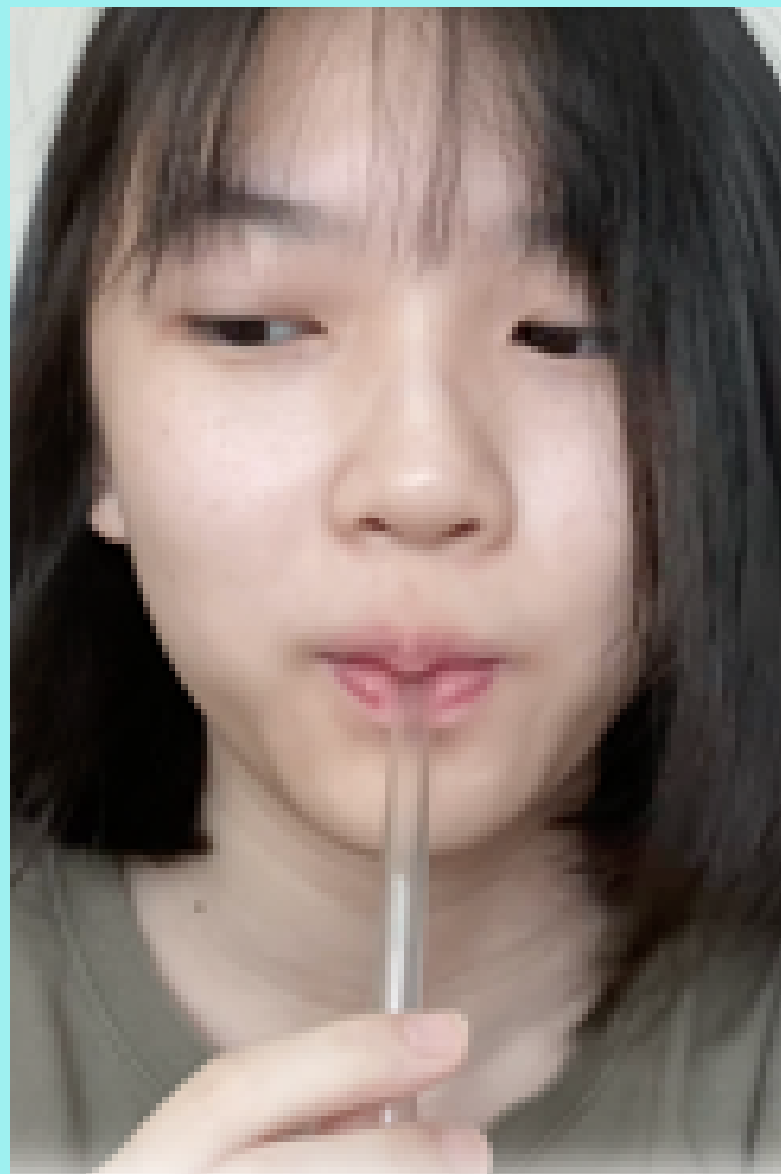
Breathing is a vital and natural process for all living organisms for survival. Normal breathing is practically effortless for most people, but those with respiratory diseases such as asthma face an arduous challenge. Throughout an asthma attack, the process of inhaling and exhaling is hampered, and it is near impossible for air to flow through the lungs.

Last Friday, I attempted the Asthma Straw Challenge. Before starting the challenge, I never thought I would face any difficulties. However, I was wrong about that.

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Though it was a simple 15 second process, I could feel tightness in my chest.

It came as a shock to me when I realised there was far lesser air available around me. As time wore on, I had to breathe harder and more frequently. I felt light-headed too. Indeed, the 15 seconds I experienced was endless. I dare not imagine what would happen if the challenge exceeded 15 seconds; it would be suffocating.



"At the end of the challenge, I began coughing and my chest felt a little tight."

More than 200 million people in the world are affected by asthma, a condition where a person's airway is narrow and produces extra mucus. This causes a person to have symptoms such as cough and shortness of breath.

Last week, I was put to a challenge and it was called the Asthma Straw Challenge. I had to breathe through a straw a few times for 15 seconds till I became breathless. At the end of the

challenge, I began coughing and my chest felt a little tight. I could only think of the time I ran in a 100 meters race where I was completely out of breath at the end.

Managing asthma symptoms may not be easy for everyone. Hence all asthma patients should follow their doctor's advice and take medications regularly to prevent an exacerbation of symptoms.

ANONYMOUS



"Do we really understand what it is like, having that sinking realisation that an asthma attack is underway?"

KHOR JING YIN, 17

For most people (an estimated 90% of most populations) who are so blessed to not suffer the agonising tightening of airways often associated with asthma, it sometimes gets difficult to picture the trouble asthma patients go through. Yes, we have the Asthma Straw Challenge which is purposed to simulate the difficulties an asthma patient may experience. However, do we really understand what it is like to have that sinking realisation that an asthma attack is underway?

First, I decided to try out the Asthma Straw Challenge. I used a metal straw I had at home and planned to breathe through it for a minute. To my disbelief, I could only do it for 30 seconds and that was the longest 30 seconds I have ever experienced. It felt like I was drowning underwater and I had to stop the challenge because I was afraid of the consequences. I believe that we should also educate ourselves on the topic at hand, to better understand and help accommodate asthma patients.

Asthma is a type of chronic condition that would affect your airways causing a difficulty in breathing. It may be stressful and irritating to have asthma while attempting to live life as normal. It can be a major problem that interferes with daily activities and may lead to a life-threatening asthma attack.

Last week, I've tried the Asthma Straw Challenge and it was extremely difficult. It felt like I was trying to gasp for air as much as I could. I also felt tightness in my chest and felt really uncomfortable. I found it hard to believe how people with asthma live through the day knowing they might get an attack like this anytime.

CHAN YUN YAN, 16

"It felt like I was trying to gasp for air as much as I could."



*"This experience
made me
sympathise
with people
who suffer
from asthma."*

Yesterday, in conjunction with World Asthma Day, I tried out the Asthma Straw Challenge. The aim of this challenge was to create awareness about how it felt being an asthma patient and the importance of preventing an asthma attack. At the end of the challenge, I was gasping for air, and I felt a little dizzy. This experience made me sympathise with people who suffer from asthma, and I was determined to learn more about the disease.

TAN CHANG YIN, 16

"It was a difficult challenge to complete. This challenge piqued my interest in learning more about asthma."



JOSHUA HON KUAN SENG, 13

This morning, I tried out the Asthma Straw Challenge. I had to breathe through a straw for one minute and explain how I felt after. At the end of the challenge, I was so relieved I could breathe normally again. It was a difficult challenge to complete. This challenge piqued my interest in learning more about asthma.

I always thought that everyone who has asthma would have the same symptoms but after reading more about asthma, I realised that this isn't true. Some may have symptoms such as

cough, wheezing, and chest tightness, while others might only have shortness of breath. Another thing I had learned, is that people with asthma should exercise regularly as it helps them to control and improve their symptoms.

In conclusion, after taking my time to read about asthma, I realised that many things I believed about asthma were not true. This is why reading information from valid sources are important so that we know the right information about diseases and can prevent the spread of misconceptions.

*"I felt my heart
beating fast and
I was
completely out
of breath."*

KHOO SZE MONN, 16

This morning, I tried out the Asthma Straw Challenge. I had to breathe through a straw for 15 seconds and explain how I feel after. At the end of the challenge I was so relieved I could breathe normally again. I felt my heart beating fast and I was completely out of breath. It was indeed a difficult challenge to do.

I always thought that people living with asthma would have the same symptoms but after reading more about asthma, I realised that this isn't true. Some may have symptoms such as cough, wheezing, and chest tightness, while others might only have shortness of breath.

With brother who has asthma, I realised that there are many misconceptions of this disease. Some common misconceptions are that people with asthma should not exercise, asthma can be cured with time and asthma is only treatable when symptoms are present.

It is important that we educate ourselves with correct information so that we do not mislead people with asthma. People with asthma could find ways to prevent asthma attacks. This includes recognising triggers and adhering to medication regimens.





*"My chest
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and telling
me to stop."*

The Asthma Straw Challenge was extremely difficult to complete. In fact, I tried it twice to see if I could complete it in 15 seconds. My chest was tightening and telling me to stop. It made me wonder how people with asthma go about their daily lives knowing an asthma attack could occur at any time.

DIXON CHEN, 14

"I was gasping for air at the end of the challenge because I was out of breath."

LEW YEN TUNG, 15



The Asthma Straw Challenge sparked my interest in learning more about asthma. I took part in this challenge, in which I breathed through a metal straw for 15 seconds. I was gasping for air at the end of the challenge because I was out of breath. That's when it hit me - people with asthma go through this every time they have an asthma attack. It is undoubtedly a difficult situation to be in.

"I believe that no one should be bullied for having asthma."

ANONYMOUS

I took up the Asthma Straw Challenge because I believe that no one should be bullied for asthma. Asthma is a very unfortunate thing to have as it affects one's daily life and prevents them from truly enjoying the wonders of life. Imagine being unable to do the many things that other people can while you cannot. Asthma should not be joked about so carelessly; people should be careful in a way that does not offend people with asthma.

I remember the time when I had to step in to stop someone from bullying a victim with asthma, it made me feel sad that there were people who thought having a lesser efficient respiratory system was almost comical for them. All of us are equal, we should not be treating people with asthma as if they were lower than us.

I witnessed a group of people surrounding this poor boy in an alley. They were threatening him for money just because he had asthma, how cruel is that? So, using my intellect and charisma, I successfully managed to persuade the bullies to stop bullying the innocent boy. To be able to do such a good deed for the people who most needed it felt great to me.

In conclusion, people with asthma should be cared for. If there was a sports-related event or otherwise, you should remember to bring an extra inhaler for them to use just in case. I believe we can make the world a better place even if it may seem like a small thing to others, but I know this can help people with asthma. If everyone did this, the world would become a better place with the power of the people.

There lived a boy with asthma. "I couldn't breathe" the boy said. It was like a dense pillow was being forced onto his face. An anvil lay on his chest as he struggled to take deep breaths but the narrow, mucus-infused trachea of his did not allow that to happen. The boy was fighting for breaths every night as if they were his last. It was as if he were 50 feet underwater with no air and immense pressure was compressing his frail body. He was rushed to the hospital room, and observed the ill people gasping for air in their last minutes of life - all the while wondering if that could be him.

Asthma was part of the boy - one might say, it was him. Friends and family looked at him and only saw that. He was "the boy with asthma" and no more than that. But some did not believe this curse was real. They believed it to be a mere attention-seeking stunt, an excuse to all his problems, a way of feeling pity and sorrow

for him. "Breathe deeper! You're so weak and thin" his mom said. "No more playing outside. It will cause you to sweat and sneeze!" his dad shouted. The small innocent boy spent his day and nights in his dark, lonely room waiting for the next attack and contemplating his every move that could cost him his life. He sat staring at the beige walls wondering when the suffering would end, if ever.

However, the boy never once gave up, he struggled but survived this horrendous and agonising disease. The things that his parents and doctors warned him about were his saviours. The swimming, running and games made his once weak and sickly lungs, strong, vibrant and resilient. The boy who was none other than my Father. I took part in the Asthma Straw Challenge to understand how people live with asthma, Now, I understand what it feels like to have asthma and I will never take my lungs for granted.



"Now, I understand what it feels like to have asthma and I will never take my lungs for granted."

LINAYSHA HYACINTH PERERA, 14

"I took on this challenge to show my support for people suffering from asthma, and it is not to be taken lightly."

ARON GOH WAY LERN, 15



It was hard to imagine, at first, what it was like to experience an asthma attack. However, nothing prepared me for the time when my friend, Alex, collapsed onto the ground. Sitting by the hospital bed, I looked at Alex desperately gasping for air with his ventilator support. Confused as I was about what had happened during our hiking trip in Broga Hills, I went to his mother for answers to my burning questions. When she said that he had a condition known as asthma, I could only recall it from one of my science classes in school. When Alex awoke from his sleep, all he could remember was experiencing a sharp pain in his chest before waking up in the bed.

Ever since that incident years ago, the doctor advised Alex to swim frequently as it could help reduce the symptoms and he has followed that advice ever since.

This time round when we were swimming, Alex started breathing heavily while he tried to keep afloat. He screamed out my name in a very hoarse voice. This occurred just five minutes after we entered the pool. Immediately, I alerted the lifeguard and pointed to Alex. The lifeguard dived into the water and came to Alex's rescue. He coughed up water and started to breathe normally after CPR was performed.

I was perplexed by the incident. However, I began to comprehend the cause of Alex's sudden asthma attack when the doctor informed me that it started up due to inhalation of chlorine. It wasn't just caused by this very swimming session, but the accumulation of chlorine from the past sessions as well. I took on this challenge to show my support for people suffering from asthma, and it is not to be taken lightly.



"I didn't know what it was like to have asthma. That is, until I took part in the Asthma Straw Challenge."

MAXINE KATHARYINA PINTO, 17

Growing up, I heard about many of my friends who had asthma, but I never gave it much thought, probably because I didn't know what it was like to have asthma. That is, until I took part in the Asthma Straw Challenge.

I witnessed my friend in high school being rushed to the emergency room due to asthma. That's when I realised asthma could be fatal! She had to carry her inhalers and medications with her at all times. Her asthma attack necessities were always important to her, and she could never afford to forget them.

She used so much of her inhaler that she could describe its taste to the last detail. She despised using it and longed for the day when she would be free of these fickle things that held her back from living a full life. Sports were her passion, but it was clear she'd never be able to reach her full potential because of her asthma attacks, or so she was told. However, that didn't stop her from doing her best. She is still one of my closest friends to this day, and she taught me that even with asthma, so much is still possible if you persevere.




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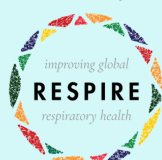
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