

Shrubs (<2m)

Use

Azalea	Banksia species 🌿	Bottlebrush 🌿
California Lilac	Callistemon 🌿	Camellia
Cistus	Dog rose	Escallonia
Flax	Gardenia ⚡	Guinea Flower
Kunzea 🌿	Lavender ⚡	Leptospermum
Melaleuca 🌿	Myrtle	Plumbago
Rosa species	Rhododendron	Silky Tea Tree 🌿
Twiggy Heath 🌿	Weigelia	Westringia 🌿
White Correa 🌿	Yucca	Salvia
Bracelet Honey Myrtle 🌿	Common White Heath 🌿	

Trees

Sometimes you need to ask about the sex of a tree or shrub, as some species have separate male and female plants. The male plant produces pollen, therefore female plants present fewer allergy problems. An example is Casuarina (She-Oaks).

Use

Bay Laurel	Cabbage Palm	Lillypilly 🌿
Citrus species 🌿	Coastal Banksia 🌿	Orchid Tree
Flowering Crab Apple	Willow Myrtle 🌿	Silky Oak 🌿
Male Gingko biloba	Old Man Banksia 🌿	Paperbark 🌿
Most Prunus species	Scribbly Gum 🌿	Tupelo
Silver Princess Gum 🌿	Peppermint Gum 🌿	

Avoid

Trees that are high in pollen include the Cypress family of trees, box hedges and pine trees.

Alder	Ash	Birch	Cypress
Elm	Hazel	Liquidambar	Maple
Mulberry	Olive	Orchid Tree	Privet
Walnut	White Cedar	Willow	She-Oak (males only)

Golden rules for an asthma & allergy friendly garden:

- 🚫 Avoid plants that pollinate themselves via the wind, they release millions of tiny pollen grains that react with our eyes, nose, sinus, and airways.
- 🚫 Choose plants that are pollinated by birds and insects rather than wind. These plants don't release their pollen into the air. Most Australian natives and brightly coloured, large flowering plants with nectar and heavy pollen grains are suitable.
- 🚫 Have only female species in your garden. Male plants produce the pollen that can be troublesome for people with asthma and allergies.
- 🚫 Avoid plants with strong fragrances or odours. There are some exceptions eg. roses. Don't plant jasmines or gardenia next to entrances, exits or under bedroom windows.
- 🚫 Choose a native or slow-growing, low or no pollen grass that does not require frequent mowing.
- 🚫 Use inorganic mulches such as pebbles and gravel to reduce weeds and cut down on mould spores which can trigger your asthma.
- 🚫 Weed the garden often.
- 🚫 Avoid compost heaps.
- 🚫 Avoid gardening on windy days when pollen may be airborne.
- 🚫 Carry your blue/grey reliever medication with you at all times, especially when working in the garden.
- 🚫 Ask your doctor for a written Asthma Action Plan. These plans outline what to do if your symptoms increase and how to cope with an asthma emergency.

Remember!

Good control of your asthma and allergies at all times will lessen the impact of any exposures. Check with your doctor that you are receiving optimal preventative management for your hayfever. Commence this before the onset of the pollen season. Using a non-sedating antihistamine prior to outdoors exposure is also useful.



Asthma & Allergy Friendly Gardens

Planting a wheeze and sneeze free garden can improve the health and wellbeing of people affected by asthma and allow them to enjoy the beauty and tranquility of nature.



'Native Rosemary' *Westringia*

Gardening without wheezing & sneezing

For the some two million Australians¹ who have asthma and/or allergies, gardening is often accompanied by symptoms of sneezing, runny or blocked noses, watery and itchy eyes and sometimes extreme fatigue.

Between August and March there is an increased amount of pollen in the air. If you have asthma and find it's much worse during these months, then chances are pollens are to blame. For many people with asthma, air borne pollen can trigger an asthma 'episode' or 'attack' and make life pretty uncomfortable.

Plants with the types of pollens that trouble us most are often found in our own gardens. Plants can also trigger or worsen symptoms because they have a strong or irritating perfume. Some plants may commonly produce an irritating skin rash if touched.

Choosing asthma and allergy friendly plants can help improve your health and wellbeing and that of your family, neighbours and friends affected by asthma and allergies.

Planting a wheeze and sneeze free garden is simple. Just follow the guidelines in this booklet and take it with you the next time you go to a nursery to select plants.

¹Toelle et al BMJ 2004; Robertson et al MJA 2004

Designing an asthma friendly garden

There are many things you can do to make your new or existing garden wheeze and sneeze free.

Look at the types of plants you have in the garden. Some, including grasses, can be pruned or cut early before they begin to release pollen.

When planning a new garden, the wide range of plants and trees available can make it difficult to choose. A nursery should be able to advise you on which plants and trees are high in pollen or are heavily scented.

The lists below include some asthma friendly plants which have been chosen because they are either insect pollinated, or sterile and propagated by cuttings or grafting. Botanical names are included in some cases where the common name may cause confusion.



Herbs

Use			
Basil	Chives	Dill	Fennel
Horseradish	Marjoram	Mint	Oregano
Parsley	Rosemary	Sage	Thyme
Avoid			
Chamomile	Wormwood		



Ground Covers

Using ground covers can reduce your lawn area. Less grass in your garden can help reduce pollen.

Use		
Canterbury Bells	Juniper	Kidney Weed
Native Violet	Pratia 🌿	Rosemary
Rosy Baeckia 🌿	Snow in Summer	Tea tree 🌿
Thyme		



Grasses

The native grasses listed only need mowing three or four times a year.

Use	
Buffalo Grass	Greenless Couch Grass
Kangaroo Grass 🌿	Rice or Weeping Grass 🌿



Flowers

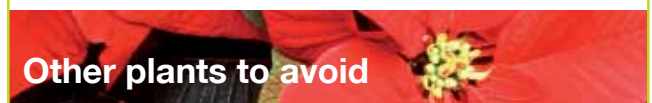
Use			
Alyssum	Anemone	Banksia Rose 🌿	Begonia
Climbing Rose 🌿	Coleus	Columbine	Cornflower
Floss Flowers	Foxglove	Glossy Abelia 🌿	Impatiens
Larkspur	Lobelia	Nasturtium	Nemesia
Pansy	Petunia	Phlox	Rosemary
Snapdragon	Verbena	Viola	
Bulbs (e.g. daffodils)			

Avoid
Asteraceae family of daisies including:
 Chrysanthemums Calendulas Marigolds



Climbers

Use		
Appleberry	Chilean Jasmine	Dusky Coral Pea 🌿
Ivy Leaf Geranium	Kiwi Fruit	Passionfruit
Star Jasmine 🌿	Trumpet Vine	Wonga Vine 🌿
Crimson Passionflower		



Other plants to avoid

Avoid weeds such as Plantain (Plantago) and Asthma Weed (Pellitory). Although not causing asthma, some of these plants may cause a rash if touched:

Clematis	Common Ivy	English Ivy
Some Grevilleas 🌿	Poinsettia	Polyanthus
Primrose	Primula	Rhus Tree

Key: 🌿 Australia native 🌿 Scented