

## FOOD NETWORK MEDIA RELEASE February 2007

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### Let's halve asthma rate in children, says Network

Research reveals that when children in NSW go back to school, their asthma attacks increase by a factor of five. The food they take to school also contains large quantities of sulphite preservatives, which have long been linked to asthma.

"You can exceed the Acceptable Daily Intake of sulphites by eating just two dried apricots", warns Dr Howard Dengate of the Food Intolerance Network. "And don't forget that any dose of sulphites can be too much for many asthmatics."

Dried fruit and muesli bars containing dried fruit are major sources of sulphites for children returning to school, as are luncheon meats, devon, sausages, cordials and drinks, including some fruit juices.

The conservative World Health Organisation says 20-30% of asthmatic children react to sulphites while Australian research has found that up to 65% of asthmatic children are affected.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has recommended phasing out the use of sulphite preservatives where possible due to effects on child asthmatics. If that happened overnight the prevalence of childhood asthma would probably halve.

Despite this evidence, the drug company-sponsored National Asthma Council of Australia continues to say of asthma and food that "Food is not a common trigger for asthma" and "Foods, drinks and food chemicals affect less than 5% of people with asthma."

Over 100 years ago the relationship between sulphites added to foods and asthma led to the first food regulations, but people have forgotten this while the food industry, government regulators and even asthma associations neglect their responsibilities for public health education.

"Look out for asthma sensitisers in your food and always read the label" suggests Dengate.

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Further resources: [www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/asthmafailsafe.htm](http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/asthmafailsafe.htm)