

Secondhand marijuana smoke causes asthma symptoms in child allergic to cannabis

16 November 2018

It's well established that secondhand smoke from cigarettes is a risk to anyone who suffers from asthma. New research being presented at the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) Annual Scientific Meeting shows it's possible for both children and adults with uncontrolled asthma to find their symptoms worsening due to cannabis allergy and exposure to marijuana smoke.

"A 6-year-old boy suffering with severe [asthma](#) had [family members](#) who frequently smoked marijuana in the house," says allergist Bryce Hoffman, MD, ACAAI member and lead author of the study.

"Even though family members didn't smoke marijuana in the same room as the child, he was exposed to traces of smoke and plant material. It was not clear why his asthma was so severe and not responding to aggressive asthma therapies until we determined he was allergic to cannabis. After the cannabis was removed from the house, his asthma improved."

In addition to the young boy's allergies to cannabis, the study indicates his grandmother also had a history of hives after personal use of cannabis.

"Although the boy didn't have any clear allergic symptoms such as hives—like his grandmother—we know indoor allergens like pets and dust mites can make asthma worse without obvious allergic symptoms," says Dr. Hoffman. "This is different from secondhand tobacco smoke which worsens asthma by irritating the lungs in a non-allergic way. The takeaway is that cannabis allergy can make asthma worse even without direct use. Anyone using [cannabis](#) needs to consider that others living in their house who have asthma—particularly [children](#)—may be at risk of uncontrolled asthma."

If your child has asthma that isn't well controlled,

see an allergist. An allergist can set your child on the right track for the long term to handle their allergies or asthma.

More information: Abstract Title: Cannabis allergy in a young child with severe asthma exposed to secondhand marijuana smoke

Provided by American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

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