Typical Formaldehyde Exposures Do Not Cause Asthma

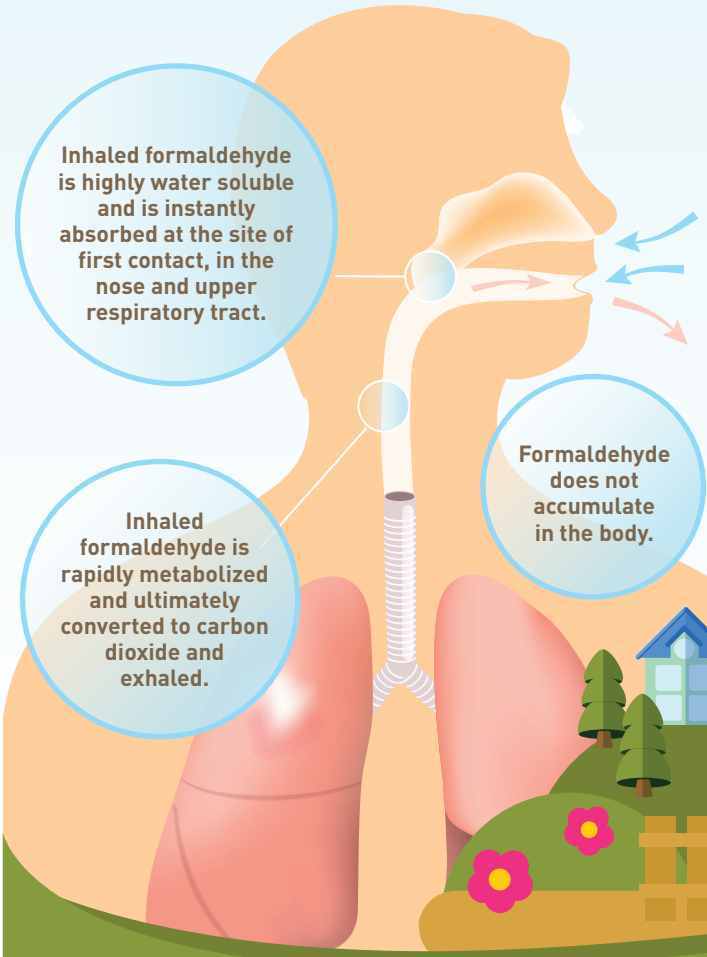
In children or adults, asthma is a chronic disease of the lower respiratory tract and lungs.

Based on a robust scientific review, the World Health Organization (WHO) has set protective indoor air guidelines for formaldehyde at 80 ppb (0.125 mg/m^3) to prevent sensory irritation and other health effects in the general population. These symptoms, like eye, nose and throat irritation, are transient and do not cause lasting health effects, such as asthma. Both the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the WHO have concluded that there is no scientific evidence that children are more or less susceptible to formaldehyde exposures than adults.

Since typical indoor air concentrations of formaldehyde are far below the levels that could cause sensory irritation, it is not plausible that everyday exposures to formaldehyde would cause asthmatic symptoms.

Further, in order for household exposure to formaldehyde to cause or exacerbate asthma, it must reach the lower respiratory tract and lungs. However, protective mechanisms in the body prevent everyday exposures to inhaled formaldehyde from reaching the lungs.

Highly-efficient protective mechanisms in the upper respiratory tract prevent everyday exposures to inhaled formaldehyde from reaching the lungs.



16-32 ppb

Typical (average) indoor formaldehyde levels[1]

80 ppb

WHO Guidelines for Indoor Air Quality for formaldehyde[1] – – protective against sensory irritation

Common established household asthma triggers

[1] http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/128169/e94535.pdf