

Spring has sprung and with it so has hayfever, thunderstorms and swooping birds! Read on for some tips on how to stay safe in spring.

Staying safe in the wild weather

It would appear that spring this year has brought us some wild weather. While the temperatures have edged their way up from the arctic climes experienced over winter, across Australia many of us are now getting drenched!

The increased rainfall and thunderstorms equal increased risks; so here are a few tips to stay safe as the skies rain down.

1. Just 15cm of rapidly moving water can sweep you off your feet, so if flowing water is above your ankle, stop and look for a safer path.
2. If there is lightening in your area stay indoors. To determine how close the lightening is to you, count the number of seconds after a lightening flash until you hear thunder. The lower the number, the closer the lightening is to you.
3. Do not attempt to drive through flood water; according to the [SES](#) your car could start to float and be swept away in as little as 15cm of water!
4. Check the forecast and emergency alerts in your area and for where you are headed before you go out.
5. Take your MePACS [mobile alarm](#) or [Solo watch](#) with you if you are going out, so we can get help to you quickly in an emergency.



Thunderstorm Asthma

The thunderstorms also bring an increased risk of what we've come to know as [Thunderstorm Asthma](#). This occurs when the weather gets warmer and more pollen is in the air, and many people experience allergies and hayfever.

When hot, dry, windy and stormy weather stirs up all the pollen, it breaks into tiny pieces, which people with allergies can then inhale, triggering an asthma attack.

Who can get it?

Thunderstorm Asthma can occur if you are outdoors in gusty winds before a thunderstorm and you have an allergy to ryegrass pollen, whether you had asthma before or not. So, if you get wheezy or sneezy from hayfever during spring and summer, have a known allergy to grass pollen or have asthma that worsens in springtime, you may be at risk.

How prevent a serious attack?

If you are at risk, it's best to speak with your doctor about getting an asthma plan and the right medicine to prevent or treat an attack. Check the forecast daily, which will let you know the pollen count for the day and in case of stormy windy weather:

1. Get inside before the storm hits.
2. If you're in a car, put the air-conditioner on recycle/recirculate.
3. Carry your medicine with you
4. Make sure you're wearing your [personal alarm](#); should an asthma attack occur, we can get help to you quickly.

Safety around the home

Spring also motivates many of us to embark on a cleaning spree! There are some simple things we can do to improve our safety around the home.

Outside

- Make sure your house is numbered clearly from the street – on your mailbox, fence post or front door. This is important if first responders are looking for your address in an emergency.
- Check all security or outdoor lighting is working.
- Ensure any paths are clear of debris and in good condition. Uneven paths, cracks and holes can increase your risk of a fall.



Inside

- Make sure any area rugs sit flat or consider removing them as they can pose a trip hazard.
- Check your smoke detectors are working.
- Check your lights are all working, (automatic LED night lights are handy), and that your windows are clean for a lighter brighter home with better visibility.
- Have any heaters, fireplaces and hot water system cleaned serviced to ensure they're in good working order to reduce fire or flood risk.
- Declutter! Get any unnecessary items or furniture off the floor or donate them to goodwill.
- And don't forget to wear your [personal alarm](#) around the home and garden, so should you need help, MePACS is there at the press of a button.



Other tips when out and about

1. Be mindful that spring is nesting season, and Magpies and Miner birds will swoop if they perceive a threat to their nest. The council will usually install signs to advise of any known swooping spots and a number of websites have popped up that list 'hot spots'. A hat and sunglasses, as well as providing sun protection, will offer additional protection in case of a swooping incident.
2. Don't forget the sunscreen – the sun's rays start to intensify over spring.
3. Drink plenty of water and don't forget your medication, including any antihistamines to combat hayfever.
4. Wear your MePACS [mobile alarm](#) or [Solo watch](#), for additional safety and peace of mind.

To find out more about how you're safer with a MePACS Personal Alarm, please contact our Sales Team on 1800 685 329 for a friendly chat or speak to your HCP Case Manager.

1800 685 329
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