New asthma breakthrough could revolutionise treatment

[Nicole Morley](http://metro.co.uk/author/nicole-morley-for-metro-co-uk/)

[Nicole Morley for Metro.co.uk](http://metro.co.uk/author/nicole-morley-for-metro-co-uk/)Saturday 6 Aug 2016 11:20 am

**A new asthma drug is set to revolutionise treatment for 500,000 Brits.**

A new study has found that people who suffer asthma brought on by exercising can be helped – by boosting good bacteria living in the human gut.

Prebiotics – food ingredients which boost the bacteria – can significantly reduce the severity of symptoms in sufferers, according to researchers at Nottingham Trent University.

Scientists found that taking prebiotic supplements greatly reduced the narrowing of the airways which sometimes affects physically active people with asthma.

The narrowing of the airways can cause side-effects such as coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath and in some cases can be fatal.

The study involved 10 people who live with the problem as well as a control group.

Researchers studied the effect over three weeks of taking the prebiotic supplement B-GOS (Bimuno-galactooligosaccharide, FYI) when compared with a placebo.

The subjects were then put through a lab test designed to monitor lung function, which falls in people with asthma.

The falls in lung function were compared along with blood samples, which would show if there was any inflammation in the airways.

Findings revealed a ‘significant reduction in the blood markers of airway inflammation’ and recorded a dramatic reduction in the severity of exercise-induced asthma.

In some cases, the prebiotic appeared to ‘completely abolish’ the increase in some of the blood markers associated with the narrowing of airways.

Lead researcher Neil Williams, a lecturer in exercise physiology and nutrition at the university’s school of science and technology, said: ‘Our study shows that this particular prebiotic could be used as a potential additional therapy for exercise-induced asthma.’

He added: ‘We are only just starting to understand the role the gut microbiome plays in health and disease – and it is becoming increasingly recognised that microbes living in the gut can have a substantial influence on immune function and allergies which is likely to be important in airway disease.

‘B-GOS acts to increase the growth and activity of good bacteria in the gut. This in turn may reduce the inflammatory response of the airways in asthma patients to exercise. Importantly, the level of improvement in lung function that appears after the prebiotic is perceivable by the patient and therefore potentially clinically relevant.’

Read more: <http://metro.co.uk/2016/08/06/new-asthma-breakthrough-could-revolutionise-treatment-6051467/#ixzz4NXVykFoI>