**Exploring asthma remedies through adverts**

***The Chemist and Druggist 1859-2010***

From its launch issue on 15 September 1859, *The Chemist and Druggist* was packed full of adverts. Established as a journal for high street pharmacists, manufacturers of medicines, equipment and supplies were keen to promote their wares to a growing market of retail pharmacists. The journal’s opening editorial announced that “our humble aim is to be simply useful…in the capacity of a *trade* journal.”

What can these adverts tell us about available medicines? This resource takes asthma as a starting point to explore the journal further. Treatments for asthma date back to ancient civilisations and it still provides a challenge for current medical researchers. Tracking adverts for remedies claiming to treat asthma through the pages of *The Chemist and Druggist* provides an insight into these ongoing developments.

**Other sources:**

Find out more about the surviving medicines at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society Museum <http://www.rpharms.com/museum-pdfs/a-asthma.pdf>

**Science Museum** on inhalers <http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/broughttolife/techniques/inhalers>

**Asthma UK history**: <https://www.asthma.org.uk/about/history/>

**Large private collection of asthma-related material** [www.inhalatorium.com](http://www.inhalatorium.com)

**US National Library of Medicine online exhibition *Breath of Life***

<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/archive/20120918/hmd/breath/breathhome.html>

**Note needed**: Later adverts for other medicines seem to make mention of asthma in terms of guidance e.g. advert for headlice treatment in 2010 says that it’s suitable for asthma. Need to state somewhere that as asthma has become more common and awareness of allergic reactions has increased, advertisers have become aware of the need to flag up the suitability of their products for asthma sufferers.

**Possible interpretive paragraphs for overarching visualisation**

**Treatments 1859 – 1900**

Soon after *The Chemist and Druggist*’s launch in 1859, Henry Hyde Salter published a milestone paper *On Asthma* (1860). His theory that asthma was a medical condition influenced by external environmental factors was a key development. In the later 19th century, scientists significantly developed their understanding both of asthma as a condition and of the actions of the drugs used to treat it.

**Treatments, 1900-1950**

During the early 20th century, drugs for asthma began a move away from natural remedies. Adrenaline and ephedrine, both originally derived from natural products, became popular treatments and demand meant scientists worked successfully to produce them synthetically. More traditional remedies continued to be popular alongside cutting edge developments.

**Treatments, 1950-1980**

By the 1980s, treatments focused on controlling and managing asthma, rather than simply treating symptoms. The introduction of corticosteroid anti-inflammatory medicines (a type of steroid hormone) allowed the inflammation of the airways to be controlled and sometimes reversed. Bronchodilators were still used to aid a patient’s breathing if they were having an attack.

**Treatments 1980-2010**

More recently, the focus of research and drug development for asthma has been the body’s response to allergens. Although corticosteroids continued to be used to control a patient’s inflamed airways, their long term use is being questioned.

In this period, the inhaler became the primary device for patients to take their medication.

**Asthma milestones, 1859-2010**

[suggestions for key image from C+D to illustrate milestone given in square brackets]

1860 Henry Hyde Salter *On Asthma* published. Amongst other things, he recommended coffee to treat asthma. <http://wellcomelibrary.org/item/b20390877> [not found ref in C+D April-Dec 1860]

1865 The Dr Nelson Inhaler was first introduced by S. Maw & Son. It is still on sale today. [check “inhaler” search for earliest result??] [Searched up to July 1865 unsuccessfully]

1887 Ephedrine isolated from the plant ephedra [not found in Jan-June 1887 – no search box for July-Dec 1887!)

1888 Alkaloids of caffeine (from coffee), theobromine (from cocoa) and theophylline (from cocoa but not used in asthma until 1922) isolated [caffeine adverts – Jan 21 1888, Feb 11 1888, 17 March 1888, 21 April 1888 re: Kola Nuts]

1908 Aminophylline isolated [not found in 1908]

1920s Ephedrine widely prescribed by doctors to treat asthma from this decade onwards

1948 Isoprenaline, a bronchodilator drug, was first introduced for use with asthma. It was commonly prescribed in an inhaler in the 1950s. [no results in 1948]

1955 Prednisolone (Delta-Cortef, Upjohn – listed on 19 December 1955), and Prednisone (Meticorten, Schering) orally administered corticosteroids, introduced [both mentioned as only available in hospitals – 12 December 1955]

1955 New compound launched “for symptomatic relief of asthma”– Aminomed Compound tablets – theophylline sodium glycinate, ephedrine hydrochloride and amylobarbitone. Plus Iso-Bronchisan tablets “provide two phase asthma therapy” – outer layer of tablet iso-propyl-nor-adrenaline, inner section contains ephedrine and theophylline [12 December 1955]

1967 Betamethasone (Becotide, Allen & Hanburys) a corticosteroid traditionally used as an external skin medication, introduced for asthma

1968 Sodium cromoglycate (Intal) a breakthrough in asthma treatment [20 Jan 1968 – but not visual]

1969 Salbutamol (Ventolin, Glaxo) for asthma [full page advert 4 Jan 1969]

1972 Beclometasone first used medically (having been patented in 1962)

1988 Potter’s inhalation products refused product licence renewal by UK Health Department

1990 Salmeterol (Serevent, Glaxo) launched [first mention as upcoming in October – 24 March 1990 – illustrated launch piece 1 December 1990]

1991 Inhaled form of steroid Beclometasone (3M Health Care) licensed for use in asthma

1998  Zafirlukast (Accolate) receptor antagonist for asthma [25 July 1998]

1998 Montelukast (MSD), a new class of inhaled medication, authorised [7 February 1998 – brand name Singulair]

2005 Omalizumab (Xolair, Novartis) launched, a new type of medication known as an anti-immunoglobulin E (IgE) antibody [5th November 2005 – launch announced, not very visual!]

**Filters/themes**

General issues:

* Searches will only bring up instances where asthma is named explicitly in an advert (should be close to 100% though?)
* Various problems around identifying definitively which is an illustration

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Research question** | **Example search** | **Issues/notes** |
| Date/date range | “what treatment was advertised for asthma in x-year?” | Illustration + asthma + 1886 |  |
| “what was the most popular asthma treatment in x-decade?” | asthma + 1890=1899 | Need to decide whether only searching on adverts (illustrations) |
| “when does x-medicine first start to be advertised?” | Illustration + “Potter’s Asthma Cure” | Need to bring back earliest result chronologically |
| Trends | “is there an steady increase in asthma remedy adverts over the period?” | Illustration + “asthma” + complete data set (1859-2010) | Analyse purely visually? |
| “are there hot spots?” | Illustration + “asthma” + complete data set (1859-2010) | Analyse purely visually? |
| “when does x-medicine first start to be advertised?” | Illustration + “Potter’s Asthma Cure” | Need to bring back earliest result chronologically |
| Brands/manufacturers | “what asthma medicines did x-brand produce/advertise?” | Illustration + “Potter’s” + “asthma” |  |
| “x-brand made asthma medicines. What else did they make?” | Illustration + “Potter’s” NOT “asthma” |  |
| “when does x-medicine first start to be advertised?” | Illustration + “Potter’s Asthma Cure” | Need to bring back earliest result chronologically |
| Substances/active ingredients | “what substance(s) were claimed to treat asthma? | “asthma” | Not just adverts?  Then purely visual search to find substances featured close by? |
| “In what time period was x-substance claimed to treat asthma?” | “asthma” + “ephedrine” + date range | Not just adverts?  Substance may not be explicitly named and/or synonym or brandname may be used |
| “were the same substances being advertised across time?” | “asthma” + “ephedrine” + date | Substance may not be explicitly named and/or synonym or brandname may be used |
| “were the substances claiming to treat asthma also being claimed to treat other conditions?” | “asthma” | Not just adverts?  Then purely visual search to find conditions featured close by? |