

What causes asthma?

Asthma can start at any age. It is difficult to know what causes asthma, but so far we know that asthma can be inherited.

Many aspects of modern lifestyles, such as changes in housing and diet and a more hygienic environment, may have contributed to the rise in asthma that has been reported in recent years.

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It appears that smoking during pregnancy increases the chance of a child developing asthma, and second-hand smoke also increases the chance of developing asthma.

Irritants in the workplace may lead to a person developing the condition. Although environmental pollution can make asthma symptoms worse, it has not been proven to cause asthma.

Triggers	Allergies
Colds and flu	Pollen
Tobacco smoke	Animals
Exercise	Dust mites

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What is asthma?

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Asthma is a condition that affects the airways – the small tubes that carry air in and out of the lungs. This causes difficulty in breathing which varies considerably within short periods of time. **Sentence added**

When a person with asthma comes into contact with an asthma trigger, the muscle around the walls of the airways tightens so that the airway becomes narrower.

The lining of the airways becomes inflamed and starts to swell. Often sticky mucus or phlegm is produced. //

All these reactions cause the airways to become narrower and irritated – leading to the problems of asthma.

Some people may have to change parts of their lifestyle because of worsening asthma problems.

The common problems include:

- coughing
- wheezing or a whistling noise in the chest
- getting short of breath
- a tight feeling in the chest

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By avoiding the triggers that make your asthma problems worse, and by taking your medicines correctly, you can continue to enjoy your usual lifestyle. It can be difficult to identify exactly what triggers your asthma.

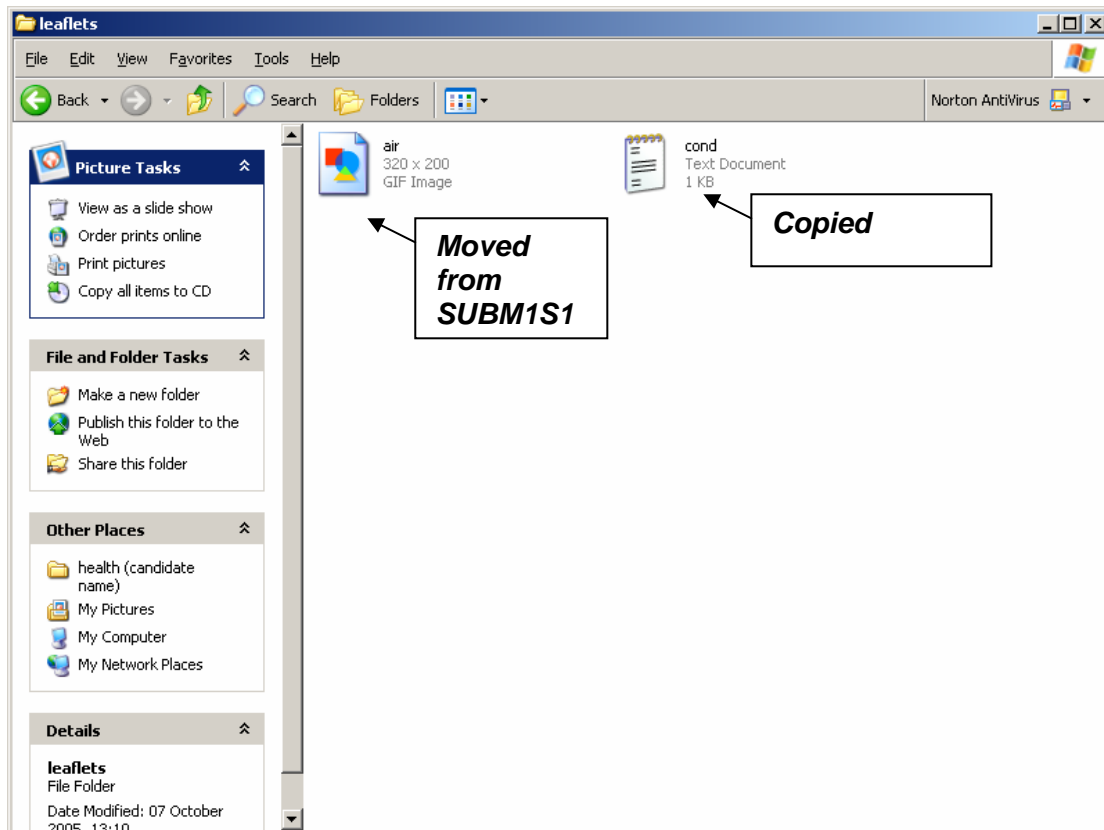
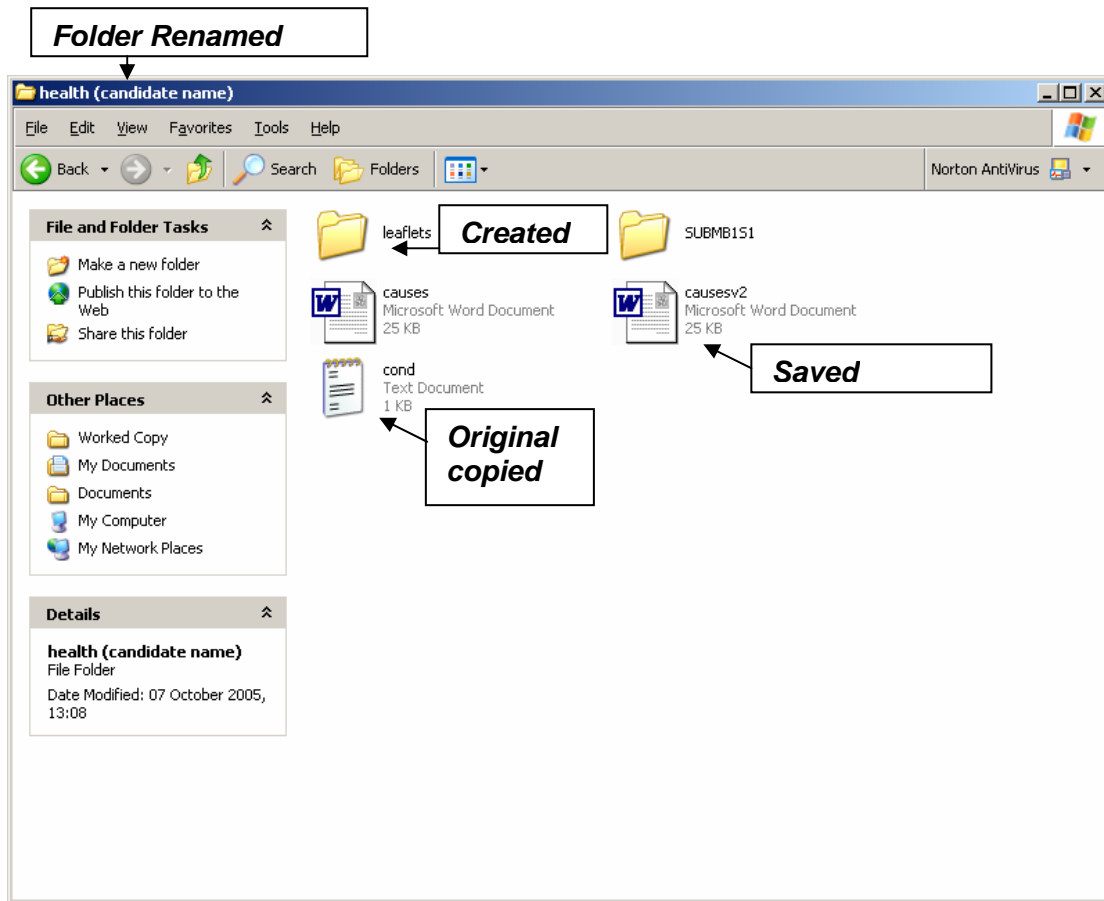
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