

Asthma affects one out of six people in eastern Colorado, according to the High Plains Research Network.

Holyoke resident Mary Bohlender has lived with asthma for about 50 years. It wasn't until she was 24 that she began to feel a tightness in her chest when it was cold out. Even mowing the lawn got to be a problem.

After suffering from bronchitis she went to the doctor to receive a shot of adrenaline. She said everything cleared up right away and that is when she found out she had asthma.

When Bohlender was diagnosed, she was given an antibiotic to help clear her up.

Bohlender and her husband Jay have moved around a lot since getting married. Out of everywhere they have lived, she said they are all about the same and one place hasn't affected her more than another.

Asthma a part of life

Written by Chris Lee

They moved near Lamar, Neb. in the early 1970s from Weld Coutny where they spent nearly 20 years. They then moved to Dalhart, Texas and moved back to this area about a year ago. She has been around farming for most of her life and said they currently farm corn, wheat and some beans. The grain dust she said, hasn't been too much of a problem.

Dust mites are the big thing Mary is allergic to. She also said cedar and juniper trees affect her. She mentioned keeping bedding washed on a regular basis is important as well as keeping a clean house.

Asthma wasn't something she was used to as there wasn't any history of asthma in her family when she was diagnosed. She does have one granddaughter who found out she was allergic to peanuts and has problems with asthma.

Spiromety tests are used to help diagnose patients with asthma. A spirometer measures the flow of air out of the lungs and can determine the severity of the asthma. Bohlender said she never took one of those tests.

Bolhlender has used a bunch of different methods to keep her asthma under control over the years. Inhalers and medicines of all kinds have been used.

In 1990 she underwent sinus surgery in Greeley. She said it helped considerably with her asthma.

While in Dalhart, new medications were being made to help treat asthma, she said. Her doctor suggested she try Accolate which affects the histamines so you don't react to the things you are allergic to.

She said one night she got so bad Jay took her to the hospital where she was given a nebulizer. She hasn't used one up until a month ago when she had a sinus infection and was forced to use one again.

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Bohlender said asthma hasn't ever gotten in the way of how she operates day to day. She gives credit to her medications. Theophylline has been used ever since she saw the first allergist. Azmacort is another medication she used regularly.