

PRESS CLIPPING SHEET

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MORE than half of the children being treated for asthma might not actually have the condition, new research suggests.

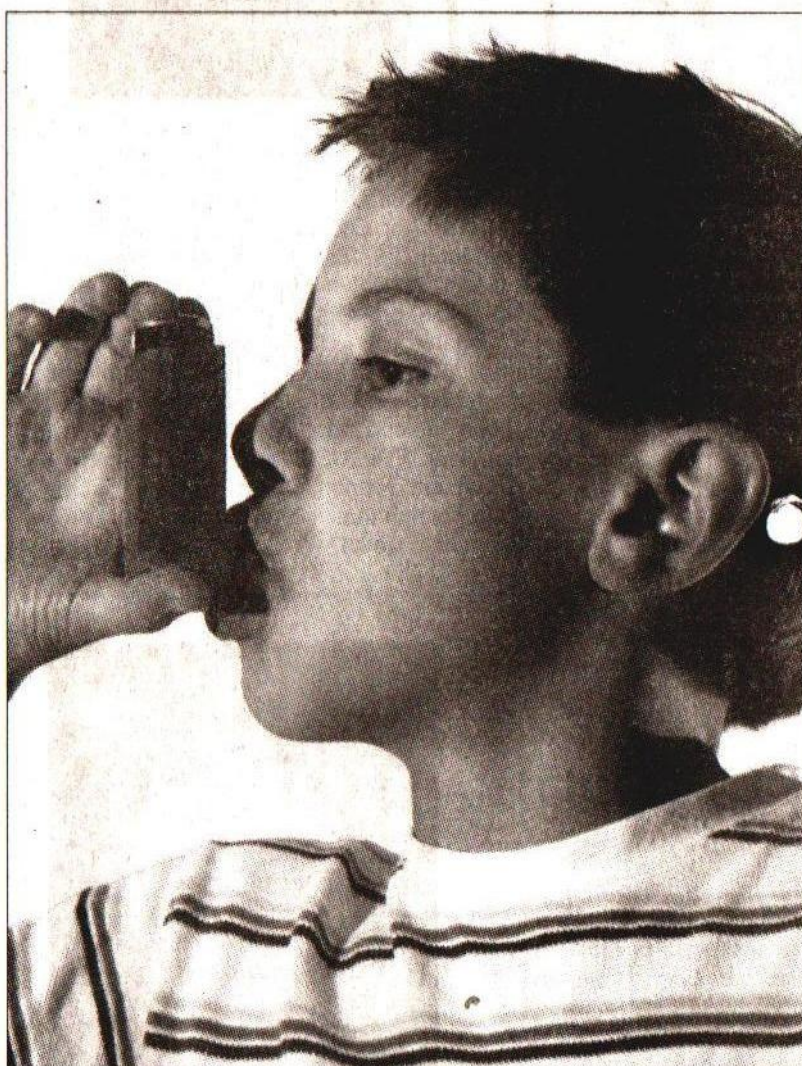
A recent study, published in the British Journal of *General Practice*, found 53 per cent of children had no clinical signs of asthma despite being diagnosed at one of four medical centres in the Netherlands, whose healthcare system is widely regarded as one of the best in Europe.

In the UK last year, researchers found that a third of adults diagnosed with asthma did not actually have it.

Dr Ingrid Looijmans-van den Akker, one of the scientists behind the Dutch research, said that "Over-diagnosis of asthma was found in more than half of the children, leading to unnecessary treatment, disease burden, and impact on their quality of life.

"Previous studies have indicated that asthma is over-diagnosed in children. However, the scale of the over-diagnosis has not been quantified.

"Only in a few children was the diagnosis of asthma confirmed using lung function tests, despite this being recommended in international guidelines. Over-diagnosis gives rise to over-prescription and incorrect use of medication, and to anxiety in parents and children."





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