

at Kenyatta National

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Abstract:

Between January 1986 and July 1988, 356 children with bronchial asthma below 14 years of age were evaluated at the Kenyatta National Hospital. 21.3% experienced initial asthmatic attacks before the age of six months and 55.1% before 2 years. Only 8% of the study patients were below the age of 2 years at recruitment. The male:female ratio was 1:1. Physical exercise led to precipitation or worsening of attacks in 43.4% while 71.6% of the patients experienced attacks in the evening or at night. 18.5% and 42.9% had personal history of a topic dermatitis and allergic rhinitis respectively. The study shows that a substantial number of patients experience initial asthmatic attacks before the age of 6 months contrary to what has been previously believed.