IS ASTHMA MORE PREVALENT AMONGST ISLAND CHILD POPULATIONS?

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SUMMARY The incidence and prevalence of wheezing in childhood appears to be rising in all westernised countries. However, there is a wide variation in wheezing prevalence between countries, despite similarities in genetic backgrounds - e.g. childhood asthma prevalence UK 10-15%, Australia 20-30%. Migration studies suggest that differences in environmental "triggers" explain at least part of this difference. The UK offshroe islands share certain common characteristics, in which they differ from the mainland land mass. The International Study of Asthma and Allergy in Childhood (ISAAC) presents the opportunity to compare asthma prevalance and risk factors amongst 13-14 year old school children between 9 Offshore British Islands, and with UK populations both nationally and regionally. Consideration of Isaac comparisons amongst island child populations will hopefully lead to further opportunities for collaborative research in this field.

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