

ASTHMA TRAINING FOR PARENTS

Hello, my name is _____ and I will present “Asthma Training for Parents.” My goal is to help you learn more about asthma and asthma triggers and how to reduce the triggers in your home for you and your family.

Before we start, here are some facts about Asthma in Children:

- * Asthma is one of the most common serious chronic diseases of childhood.
- * Asthma is the third-ranking cause of hospitalization among children under 15.
- * An average of one out of every 10 school-aged children has asthma.
- * 10.5 million school days are missed each year due to asthma.

OBJECTIVES

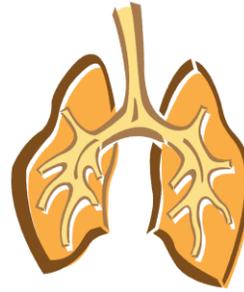
- Define asthma
- Identify causes of asthma
- Identify several indoor and outdoor asthma triggers that may exist in the home environment
- Identify common signs and symptoms of an asthma attack
- Indicate methods to minimize and/or avoid asthma triggers in the home
- Identify ways to manage children diagnosed with asthma
- Identify resources available to families dealing with asthma

At the completion of the training, parents will be able to:

- Define asthma
- Identify causes of asthma
- Identify several indoor and outdoor asthma triggers that may exist in the home environment
- Identify common signs and symptoms of an asthma attack
- Indicate methods to minimize and/or avoid asthma triggers in the home
- Identify ways to manage children diagnosed with asthma
- Identify resources available to families with dealing with asthma

WHAT IS ASTHMA?

- Asthma is a chronic, inflammatory disease of the respiratory system that causes the airways of the lungs to tighten and constrict



A chronic condition is one that is ongoing.

Three things can happen during an asthma episode:

- Swelling of the airways (inflammation)
- Squeezing- the air passages are squeezed together by the muscles that surround the outside of each airway (constriction)
- Clogging- the mucus blocks the airways and thus allows less air to pass through the airways
- This combination of swelling, squeezing, and clogging dramatically reduces the size of the airways.

ASTHMA FACTS

- Currently, there is no cure for asthma
- Asthma is a leading cause of missed school days among school-aged children
- Asthma affects people of all ages, races and cultures, but is especially common among children
- Asthma accounts for many hours of disrupted sleep and routine activities
- Asthma and allergies are often related and influence one another



Asthma cannot be cured, but it can be managed.

An average of one out of every 10 school-aged children has asthma.

10.5 million school days are missed each year due to asthma.

Annual expenditures for health and lost productivity due to asthma are estimated at over \$56 billion, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

CAUSES OF ASTHMA

- There is no single cause for asthma
- Children are more likely to develop asthma if their parents have it
- Exposure to some viral infections as infants when the immune system is not fully developed may lead to asthma

There is no single cause for asthma-Talk to your doctor about your child's asthma and make sure you understand all of your doctor's answers and explanations.

Children are more likely to develop asthma if their parents have it. Make sure you talk to your doctor about your history with asthma.

Exposure to some viral infections as infants when the immune system is not fully developed may lead to asthma.

For children who have asthma, it is necessary to work with a doctor to find the right medications, identify triggers and develop an asthma action plan. A copy of the asthma action plan from your family's doctor should be on file with the child care center or school.

Note: We will not be discussing medications in this presentation.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Common signs and symptoms include:

- Excessive coughing
- Wheezing
- Chest tightness
- Shortness of breath



Often your child may show some of the signs and symptoms above. Warning signs are clues that your child's asthma may be getting worse. A very young child may not be able to tell you how he or she feels. So you may have to watch a younger child more closely to find out if something is wrong.

- Coughing at night or after physical activity, or a cough that lasts more than a week. Coughing can also be a warning sign of an impending episode for some people with asthma.
- Wheezing: Sounds like a high pitched raspy whistle. You may hear the wheeze when your child exhales. As the episode progresses, you may hear the wheeze when the person inhales and exhales.
- Tightness in the chest: Some kids may describe this sensation as a heaviness in the chest. You may even see them attempt to press down on their chest in an attempt to alleviate the pressure.
- Shortness of breath: Your child may complain of being winded, or can't catch their breath.
- Waking at night with any of the above symptoms, which is a key marker of uncontrolled asthma. These nighttime awakenings may manifest during the day as your child being tired at school or demonstrating an inability to focus.
- One or more of these may be present and the absence of wheezing may mean there is no air moving through the lungs at all.

INDOOR ASTHMA TRIGGERS IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

- Animal dander, saliva
- Cockroaches
- Mold
- Secondhand smoke
- Dust
- Dust mites
- Perfumes & sprays
- Cleaning products



Things that cause asthma attacks are called triggers. Triggers are everywhere. Once you know what triggers your child's asthma, it is important to take steps to control these triggers. Here are some indoor asthma triggers that you may find in your home.

Animal dander, saliva

Cockroaches

Mold

Secondhand smoke

Dust

Dust mites

Perfumes & sprays

Cleaning products

OUTDOOR ASTHMA TRIGGERS IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

- Pollen
- Air pollution
- Cold air exposure



Outdoor Triggers such as pollen, air pollution, cold air exposure, and secondhand smoke may cause asthma.

Air pollution consists of very small particles in the air that come from things like cars, factories, smoke and road dust.

Ozone and particle pollution can cause asthma attacks.

* When ozone levels are high, more people with asthma have attacks that require a doctor's attention.

* Ozone makes people more sensitive to asthma triggers such as pet dander, pollen, dust mites, and mold.

Changes in weather and temperature can affect some student's asthma.

OTHER ASTHMA TRIGGERS IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

- Respiratory infections (Cold, Flu, Pneumonia, Bronchitis)
- Foods (Nuts, Eggs, Milk, Shrimp, Citrus Fruit)
- Allergies
- Exercise

Here are a couple of additional Asthma triggers that you may experience.

The most common cause of asthma episodes is colds or other upper respiratory infections.

Certain foods may be asthma triggers for you, discuss this with your doctor. Allergy skin tests can be done to determine if you are allergic to these foods.

Some symptoms of food allergies are hives, rash, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. If you have food allergies that trigger symptoms of an asthma attack, you will likely experience these allergy symptoms, followed by coughing and wheezing. And if not caught quickly, anaphylaxis -- swelling of the throat, cutting off the airway -- may result.

Exercise and other activities that make you breathe harder especially in cold air can be a problem for some kids.

HOW TO MINIMIZE INDOOR ASTHMA TRIGGERS IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

Pets

- Keep household pets off of furniture
- Keep pets in clean, caged environments if needed
- Ensure that household pets are groomed regularly
- Isolate pets away from children diagnosed with asthma or known allergies
- Place animal cages away from air vents to avoid circulation of dander



Fish are asthma friendly pets

Proteins in your pet's skin flakes, urine, feces, saliva and hair can trigger asthma. Dogs, cats, rodents (including hamsters and guinea pigs) and other warm-blooded mammals can trigger asthma in individuals with an allergy to animal dander.

The most effective method to control animal allergens in the home is to not allow animals in the home. If you remove an animal from the home, it is important to thoroughly clean the floors, walls, carpets and upholstered furniture

Actions to take at home:

Keep household pets off of furniture

Keep pets in clean, caged environments if needed

Ensure that household pets are groomed regularly

Isolate pets away from children diagnosed with asthma or known allergies

Place animal cages away from air vents to avoid circulation of dander

HOW TO MINIMIZE INDOOR ASTHMA TRIGGERS IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

Pests

- Keep food containers sealed and properly stored
- Remove food particles off of tables and countertops
- Sweep, vacuum, and mop floors regularly
- Remove trash daily



Droppings or body parts of cockroaches and other pests (such as mice) can trigger asthma. Certain proteins are found in cockroach feces and saliva, and mouse urine, and can cause allergic reactions or trigger asthma symptoms in some individuals.

Actions to take home:

Keep food containers sealed and properly stored

Remove food particles off of tables and countertops

Sweep, vacuum, and mop floors regularly

Remove trash daily

HOW TO MINIMIZE INDOOR ASTHMA TRIGGERS IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

Pests

- Place outdoor trash cans away from the entrance of the home to minimize opportunities for pests to enter
- Remove areas of clutter where pests may hide
- Seal cracks and crevices in the home's foundation through which pests can enter



Is your family bugged by pests like ants, spiders, cockroaches, termites, or mice? You're not alone. You can effectively control or kill pests when you take action to starve them out, dry them out, and keep them out.

(website for more information)

Preventing Pest at home:

<http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/Publications/preventpest.pdf>

HOW TO MINIMIZE INDOOR ASTHMA TRIGGERS IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

Mold and Moisture Control

- Fix plumbing and moisture problems as soon as possible to minimize or prevent mold growth
- Provide adequate ventilation in the home
- Address signs of water damage as soon as noted
- Dry damp or wet things completely within one to two days
- Avoid installing carpet in areas likely to be exposed to moisture

Molds are microscopic fungi that live on plant and animal matter. Molds can be found almost anywhere when moisture is present. Molds create tiny spores to reproduce, just as plants produce seeds. Mold spores float through the indoor and outdoor air continually. When mold spores land on damp places indoors, they may begin growing.

For people sensitive to molds, inhaling mold spores can trigger an asthma attack.

Actions to take at home:

Fix plumbing and moisture problems as soon as possible to minimize or prevent mold growth

Provide adequate ventilation in the home

Address signs of water damage as soon as noted

Avoid installing carpet in areas likely to be exposed to moisture

HOW TO MINIMIZE INDOOR ASTHMA TRIGGERS IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

Secondhand Smoke

- Make your home Smoke-free
- Educate and encourage family members that smoke to do so outside and away from your children



Secondhand smoke is the smoke from a cigarette, cigar or pipe, and the smoke exhaled by a smoker. Secondhand smoke contains more than 4,000 substances, including several compounds that cause cancer.

Secondhand smoke can trigger asthma episodes and increase the severity of attacks. Secondhand smoke is also a risk factor for new cases of asthma in preschool-aged children. Children's developing bodies make them more susceptible to the effects of secondhand smoke and, due to their small size, they breathe more rapidly than adults, thereby taking in more secondhand smoke. Children receiving high doses of secondhand smoke, such as those with smoking parents, run the greatest relative risk of experiencing damaging health effects.

Approximately 20 percent of children with asthma are exposed to secondhand smoke.

Actions to take at home:

Don't let anyone smoke near your child.

If you smoke — until you can quit, don't smoke in your home or car.

HOW TO MINIMIZE INDOOR ASTHMA TRIGGERS IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

Dust and Dust Mites

- Keep rooms in the home as clean and clutter free as possible
- Dust furniture regularly with a damp cloth and allow sufficient time to dry
- Wash pillows, blankets, and stuffed toys often
- Use dust proof covers on pillows and mattresses



Dust mites are tiny bugs that are too small to see. Every home has dust mites. They feed on human skin flakes and are found in mattresses, pillows, carpets, upholstered furniture, bedcovers, clothes, stuffed toys and fabric and fabric-covered items.

Body parts and droppings from dust mites can trigger asthma in individuals with allergies to dust mites.

Actions to take at home:

Keep rooms in the home as clean and clutter free as possible

Dust furniture regularly with a damp cloth and allow sufficient time to dry

Wash pillows, blankets, and stuffed toys often

Use dust proof covers on pillows and mattresses

HOW TO MINIMIZE INDOOR ASTHMA TRIGGERS IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

Perfumes and Cleaning Products

- Limit the use of scented aerosols and perfumes in the home
- Use cleaning supplies in the absence of children and in areas with adequate ventilation



Chemical irritants are found in some products in your house and may trigger asthma. Your asthma or your child's asthma may be worse around scented or unscented products such as cleaners, paints, adhesives, pesticides, cosmetics or air fresheners.

Chemical irritants may exacerbate asthma. At sufficient concentrations in the air, many products can trigger a reaction.

Remember to always follow the instructions on the label of any product used in the child care setting.

Actions to take at home:

Limit the use of scented aerosols and perfumes in the home

Use cleaning supplies in the absence of children and in areas with adequate ventilation

Remember to always follow the instructions on the label of any product

HOW TO MINIMIZE OUTDOOR ASTHMA TRIGGERS IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

- Watch for the Air Quality Index (AQI) and stay indoors on Ozone Action Days
- Be mindful of outside play time when grass is being cut
- Consider limited outside play time when the weather is extremely cold



Other ways to minimize outdoor asthma triggers in the home environment:

Monitor the Air Quality Index on your local weather report.

Know when and where air pollution may be bad.

Regular exercise is healthy. Check your local air quality to know when to play and when to take it a little easier.

Schedule outdoor activities at times when the air quality is better. In the summer, this may be in the morning.

Stay inside with the windows closed on high pollen days and when pollutants are high.

Use your air conditioner to help filter the air coming into the home. Central air systems are the best.

Remove indoor plants if they irritate or produce symptoms for you or your family.

Pay attention to asthma warning signs. If you start to see signs, limit outdoor activity. Be sure to talk about this with your child's doctor.

PREVENTING AND MANAGING ASTHMA EPISODES

- Work with your child's medical provider to develop an Asthma Action Plan
 - Make sure your child has the right medications and knows how to take them
- Know your child's asthma triggers
 - Make your home Asthma Friendly
- Know what to do if your child has an asthma episode



To prevent and manage asthma episodes at home, parents need to maintain an asthma friendly environment in the home. Educate family members on their role to help ensure their home is asthma friendly and the most importantly, make sure all family members know what to do in case of an asthma emergency.

MAKE AN ASTHMA ACTION PLAN:

The action plan looks at what triggers will bring on an asthma attack. The plan also includes your child's daily medicine needs. And the plan lists rescue medicines for quick-relief during an attack or when asthma signs start.

PREVENTING AND MANAGING ASTHMA EPISODES

- Ensure appropriate family members are aware of your child’s asthma and how to respond
- Make sure that childcare providers are aware of your child’s asthma condition and how to respond
- Be sure that family members know when it is appropriate to call 911 for additional help

Work with your child’s doctor and come up with a written action plan for managing your child’s asthma.

Share the action plan with your child’s school, teachers, babysitters, and family members.

Talk it over with people in your child’s life. In case of an asthma attack they will know what to do.

While asthma action plans differ from doctor to doctor, most plans will address two areas: a daily program and a rescue program.

Follow the action plan. It can help lower the number of asthma attacks. Talk to your child’s doctor if you need to make changes in the plan.

RESOURCES

**U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services-Administration for Children
and Families**

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-
Asthma Program**

<http://www.epa.gov/asthma/>



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For more information about asthma and asthma triggers and Head Start, please visit the following websites.

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>

<http://www.epa.gov/ashtma/>

RESOURCES

**U.S. Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention**

<http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/>

**National Asthma Education and Prevention
Program**

**[http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/lung/
index.htm#asthma](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/lung/index.htm#asthma)**

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National Asthma Education and Prevention Program

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/lung/index.htm#asthma>

RESOURCES

**Allergy and Asthma Network/Mothers of
Asthmatics**

<http://www.aanma.org>

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

<http://www.aafa.org>

Allergy and Asthma Network/Mothers of Asthmatics

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QUESTIONS



Together we can make a difference. We can take steps to help our children keep their asthma under good control at home.

(Ask the audience) Do you have any questions? (Be prepared to answer questions)

(Thank the audience for attending the presentation)