

Submitted Articles

Local asthma coalitions in Wisconsin have shared the following articles they've used in their communities as examples/templates for you to use in your community. These could be placed in your organizational newsletters, local newspaper or other local publications. Please give credit to the local coalition who submitted each article used.

To submit an asthma article used in your community, please send it by E-mail to kgrimes@chw.org.

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Disclaimer: The Wisconsin Asthma Coalition has not reviewed the following articles for content and does not necessarily endorse the information provided.

Asthma and School

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

School is starting! Are you prepared? In the Milwaukee area, about 15% of all children under age 10 have asthma, and most children spend between 6 to 12 hours a day at school, preschool or with childcare providers. It is important for good asthma control that you make sure your child's "asthma control plan" is consistently used in non-home locations as well. Parents should work as a team with the teacher or childcare provider. Good communication is the key!

1. **Make sure the school has a copy of your Asthma Action Plan.** Update it every year.
2. **Keep a quick relief medicine (like albuterol) readily available at school.** State law allows a child to carry their quick relief inhaler with them in school. Physician and parent authorization is required. Otherwise, keep it in the healthroom or office per school policy. Make sure your child knows where it is located & when to use it.
3. **Talk to your child's teacher at before school conferences or orientation to agree on a plan & goals for managing your child's asthma.** Ask for time to meet with them if needed and give them a copy of the asthma action plan also. Discuss how the plan is working at quarterly conferences or on the phone. The more you can work as a team with the teacher the better for your child. Topics to discuss with the teacher are:
 - ∞ Discuss your child's school-related triggers such as chalk dust, old carpets, and strong smells. Ask about any classroom pets.
 - ∞ Discuss your child's early symptoms of an asthma flare up such as dark circles under the eyes, itchy throat, cough, tightness in throat or chest. Wheezing and shortness of breath are later signs. Refer to the action plan for how to treat it.
 - ∞ If your child needs to pre-treat 20-40 minutes before gym class or recess, discuss options for making this work in the classroom. (e.g. where the medicine is stored, the school layout and how to get it easily, timing.)
 - ∞ Arrange an indoor recess plan for asthma ozone days, respiratory infections, and severe cold weather days.
 - ∞ Offer information about asthma if they want it.
4. **Parents need to communicate with the teacher/provider about ongoing asthma flare-ups.** For example, send note to the teacher explaining that your child has a cold virus so she needs to take "preventive" quick-relief medicine at lunchtime for the next week to help keep her airways open. Let them know at other times when her asthma is not controlled and what "the plan" is to support her.
5. **Consider keeping a peak flow meter at school.** Peak flow meters provide an objective measure of airflow, and when combined with evaluating symptoms, can offer the child, school staff, and parent (usually over the phone) more information to make treatment decisions. They can help parents determine when they need to pick up their child from school and when the child can go back to class.

In summary, both parents and teachers want your child to do well in school. Keeping his/her asthma under control so he/she is healthy, can focus in school and learn requires a team effort. Start the school year out right and communicate now, before it becomes a problem.

By Kathy Levac RN MS, mother of two children with asthma and nurse educator with Health & Wellness Enterprises LLC.

Asthma Awareness Month

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

Asthma ranks among the most common chronic health conditions in the United States, affecting more than 20 million people including more than 6 million children. In Wisconsin asthma affects [insert your state-specific data here].

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory lung disease that has been on the increase throughout the world. In the U.S., rates of asthma prevalence, deaths, hospitalizations, and emergency department visits have been increasing for more than two decades, especially among African Americans and children. It can be life-threatening, but there have been many advances in understanding the causes and best treatments for the disease, and today most people with asthma who manage it effectively can live the full life that they choose. Despite the advances, however, rates of asthma related deaths, hospitalizations, and emergency department visits continue to increase, and asthma still claims the lives of more than 5,000 Americans each year. In 2000, nearly 5,000 Americans died from asthma, and African Americans were the most likely to die. In fact, the asthma death rate for African Americans was 3 times that for non-Hispanic whites and 2.7 times that for Hispanics.

The cost of asthma is estimated to be more than \$12 billion annually, with direct costs exceeding \$8 billion and lost earnings due to illness and death adding up to nearly \$5 billion.

Test your asthma knowledge:

True False

1. ___ ___ Asthma is a chronic lung disease
2. ___ ___ Asthma can be life threatening if not treated and controlled well
3. ___ ___ Triggers cause asthma attacks. Churches are a place without triggers because there are no animals (or smoking?) in the church.
4. ___ ___ Not everyone's symptoms of asthma are the same
5. ___ ___ Narrowing of the air tubes makes it difficult for air to get in and out of the lungs
6. ___ ___ Asthma is caused by a virus
7. ___ ___ Coughing is not a symptom of asthma
8. ___ ___ Asthma medication should only be taken when you have an attack
9. ___ ___ Using an inhaler at least three times a day is the best way to control asthma

Answers: 1. True 2. True 3.False 4. True 5. True 6. False 7. False 8.False 9. False

Developed by: Rhonda Duerst

Asthma Management during the Holidays

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

The old adage reads: "...all the children were nestled in their beds with visions of sugar plums running through their heads..." This adage always brings back many fond memories. As the approaching holiday season is almost upon us, the hustle and bustle of life seems to overwhelm us. New and different stresses can now be found.

The time to take care of our asthma is NOW. We need to always be familiar with our triggers, signs and symptoms. We need to stay in "control" of our asthma. Here are a few thoughts in how we can be more in "control" of our asthma during the holiday season.

- ∞ When preparing to clean house for that special family time, be cautious of the chemicals that we use for cleaning. Using the cleaning products that do not have any odor will help keep our asthma under control.
- ∞ Wearing a mask when dusting/cleaning will once again keep the allergens from causing us to suffer an "asthma episode".
- ∞ When decorating for the holidays we need to be aware of the pine needles from trees and wreaths. Decorations that have sat in the storage closet all year long also may contain dust and dust mites. A true asthmatics enemy.
- ∞ The need for plenty of rest during this stress filled time is truly apparent.
- ∞ Many exotic foods and beverages may contain alcohol, peanuts, or shellfish in the ingredient list. When in doubt about what possible ingredients are in something, always ask!
- ∞ Finding that new pet (dog, cat, rabbit, etc.), under the tree on Christmas Day can be very exciting; however, so often an asthmatic is found to be allergic to the dander and/or saliva of the pet.
- ∞ Stuffed toys can also be found to hold on to dust and dust mites. Once again, an asthmatics least favorite friend.
- ∞ Finally, the holiday season holds many family gatherings and get togethers. One unfortunate side effect is that there is so much cigarette smoking to be found. Once again, smoke is one of our many triggers.

We can enjoy the holidays as well as be in control of our asthma. Take the time to perform a peak flow meter reading every morning and every evening during this stress filled time. This is your first line of defense to an "asthma episode". Follow the "Action Plan" that you and your doctor have filled out. Enjoy the season. Hopefully these helpful hints will help to you to be "asthma episode" free this holiday season.

Developed by: by Cathy Kidd, Aurora

DOES YOUR SCHOOL HAVE A PLAN FOR ASTHMA?

Submitted by: Fond du Lac Asthma Management Coalition

Your child has asthma and you know how to manage it at home. Do you worry about your child and how he or she will manage it while at school or participating in after school activities?

It should be every school's goal to offer assistance and support to assure that your student with asthma feels safe and secure while at school. Everyone, including parent(s), student, medical providers, school staff and school health personnel, help your student have a normal lifestyle and a positive school experience.

For example:

- ∞ *The medical provider(s)* works with the family to educate them about asthma and the day to day management. They have helped the family and child to make the needed lifestyle changes and developed an overall plan of care.
- ∞ *The parent* should provide the teachers and school health staff with the necessary medical information, emergency procedures, the medical equipment such as inhalers, nebulizer, peak flow meter, and keep the school informed of any medical changes.
- ∞ *The student* should know and be able to recognize their early warning signs and inform the teacher of any symptoms or possible emergency. Know where their medication is and be able to access it when needed Know how to avoid their triggers and to exercise regularly.
- ∞ *The school* should provide a supportive learning environment, treat the child normally and help other children to do the same, and to know what to do in an emergency. Know phone numbers of parent/caregiver and physician.
- ∞ *The School Nurse* meets with the child to identify concerns at school and assess their understanding of asthma and their medication. She/He would then talk to the parent if they would have any concerns about asthma management at school. The nurse would get a release of information from the parent to talk with the medical provider and develop an individualized plan for the student. This plan would be shared with all the teachers, coaches and even bus drivers if necessary. She would also educate and train the staff. She/He also maintains communication with the parent, student and medical provider.

The well being of your child with asthma requires a collaborative relationship between the school and home. You, your child, and your child's medical team are responsible for the overall care planning and management of asthma. The school is responsible for assuring that the plan of care is being implemented and supported in the school setting, and that all factors related to the child's asthma care at school are communicated to you

The most important thing to remember about your child's health is to always communicate your child's health needs to everyone who is involved with your child not just at school.

Patti Shippee, RN, Agnesian School Nurse

Don't Stop Your Meds....Without Talking to Your Doctor

Submitted by: Fond du Lac Asthma Management Coalition

Each person's asthma is unique. The medicines your doctor prescribes are to help control your or your child's specific asthma symptoms. Stopping or cutting back on asthma medications without talking with the doctor first could lead to a life-threatening situation.

There are many reasons why people do not take their medications as directed:

- ∞ The drug causes side effects that you don't like.
- ∞ You think your asthma is under control and so don't need the medicine any more.
- ∞ The medicine is very expensive so you cut back to make it last longer.
- ∞ Your life is so busy that you forget to take medicines as ordered.

But the end result of not taking medicines as ordered is usually the same – REDUCING OR STOPPING THE MEDICINES USUALLY MEANS THAT YOU OR YOUR CHILD WILL GET WORSE.

A recent study found that 75% of children who did not take asthma medications as prescribed had at least one of the following: increased symptoms, limited physical activity, nighttime awakenings and more frequent asthma attacks. In addition, children who didn't take their medication as prescribed had 38% MORE doctor visits and 14% MORE emergency room visits. We must not underestimate how serious asthma is. In fact, one in three *fatal* asthma attacks worldwide involve a child with a mild form of asthma. So, if you are thinking about cutting down on your medications or stopping them all together, PLEASE discuss this with the doctor FIRST. It may save your life or the life of your child.

If finances are a problem for you, there are programs to help pay for medications. The following companies are just a few that offer patient assistance programs for many asthma medications. Each program is different but if you meet the specific requirements, medicines are available at reduced costs or for free. (Additional companies can be found at www.needymeds.com.)

- ∞ Astra Zeneca Pharmaceuticals 1-800-424-3727
Includes Accolate and Pulmicort.
- ∞ Boehringer Ingelheim 1-800-556-8317
Includes Atrovent, Combivent and Spiriva
- ∞ Glaxo Smith Kline 1-866-728-4368
Includes Advair Diskus, Flovent and Ventolin HFA
- ∞ Ivax Pharmaceuticals 1-866-482-9633
Includes Proventil HFA and Qvar
- ∞ King Pharmaceuticals 1-866-734-7366
Includes Intal inhalers and nebulizer solution and Tilade inhaler
- ∞ Schering Plough Corporation 1-800-656-9485
Includes Asmanex, Foradil and Proventil.

Jeff Worm, RPh, Wal-Mart Pharmacy

Exercise

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

All people with asthma should be able to exercise as much as desired without having symptoms. If symptoms occur, the asthma might not be in control.

Plan for exercise:

- ∞ You may need to use medicine 15-20 minutes before exercising (talk with your doctor)
- ∞ Warm up slowly for 10-20 minutes before exercising
- ∞ If exercising outdoors, check the air quality index and dress for the weather
- ∞ Always carry your quick-relief medicine with you
- ∞ Make sure coaches know about your asthma and have a copy of your asthma care plan

Everyone needs exercise for healthy lungs, even people with asthma. Make asthma care and exercise routine!

Developed by: Erin Lee

FAM Allies reminds patients with asthma about the proper use of medications

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

Asthma is a chronic disease in which the airways are inflamed and the muscles around the airways tighten or constrict. If you control the airway inflammation, then you control the asthma. However, if you don't control the inflammation, the asthma controls you.

Key educational points include;

- 1) **Controllers:** Daily use of your anti-inflammatory controller medicine will control your asthma. You must use it every day, even if you feel fine, to keep asthma symptoms and attacks from starting.
- 2) **Quick Relievers:** Always keep your quick relievers with you because these medicines work quickly to treat attacks and/or to relieve symptoms.
- 3) **The Rules of 2:** If you have day time symptoms more than two times a week or night time symptoms more than two times a month, the inflammation is not being controlled. You must contact your doctor.

Asthma medications, when taken properly, help patients to live healthy, active and normal lives

Developed by: Advanced Healthcare

FAM Allies urges parents to monitor their child's asthma during the winter months

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

Winter in Wisconsin means we all need to be wary of the weather, especially those with asthma. Cold air can trigger asthma flare-ups, cause tightening in the lungs, and lead to asthma attacks. People with asthma should cover their nose and mouth with a scarf or mitten when outside. This helps to warm the air before it is breathed into the lungs and breathing warmer air can help people with asthma avoid a flare-up.

Winter is also the cold and flu season. Colds and other respiratory infections can lead to asthma flare-ups, so it is important to be proactive in avoiding illness. It is recommended that all people with asthma receive an annual flu shot. Also, frequent hand-washing with soap can reduce your exposure to the bugs that can make you sick.

Developed by: Erin Lee

"Fight Asthma in Milwaukee- Keep Your Child Smoke Free"

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

Children's asthma is worsened by second-hand smoke. Smoke at home, in cars, the homes of other family members, friends, restaurants can trigger asthma attacks and respiratory diseases.

Parents want what is best for their kids, but quitting is tough. New research shows smokers can quit with the right help and information. Here are simple steps to success:

1. Get ready, prepare, have a plan, set a quit date a week or two before quitting, notice where, when, and why you smoke.
2. Get support from family, friends, co-workers. Call the free Wisconsin Quit Line for support and information --1-877-270-STOP, Talk to your health care provider.
3. Change your routine, get rid of ash trays, take action to reduce stress and increase healthy habits.
4. Get FDA approved medication and use it correctly. Call your health care provider or talk to a pharmacist. These six medications are approved:
 - ∞ Bupropion SR—prescription.
 - ∞ Nicotine gum—over-the-counter.
 - ∞ Nicotine inhaler—prescription.
 - ∞ Nicotine nasal spray—prescription.
 - ∞ Nicotine patch—prescription and over-the-counter.
 - ∞ Nicotine lozenge - over-the counter

Your insurance may cover these medications. Medicaid, Title 19, BadgerCare and SeniorCare all provide coverage. Your employer may also provide coverage. They want healthy employees with healthy children.

5. Most relapse back to smoking occurs early on. Don't be discouraged if you start smoking again. Quit again right away.

Quitting smoking is the best thing parents can do for their own health and for their children too. Get help, keep trying and don't give up!

Developed by: Mary Cywinski

How to Help Someone Who is Having an Asthma Flare-up

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

Do you have asthma? If not, someone you know may have asthma. There are more than 120,000 children in Wisconsin that have been diagnosed with asthma. Asthma flare-ups are triggered by many things and can happen unexpectedly. Would you know how to help someone having an asthma flare-up?

Asthma flare-ups can be prevented:

- ∞ Avoid asthma triggers
- ∞ Monitor asthma symptoms and take quick-relief medications at the earliest sign of an asthma flare-up
- ∞ Take prescribed long-term control medications everyday, even when you feel OK

When someone with asthma begins having trouble breathing, you can help:

- ∞ Stay Calm
- ∞ Have the person sit and encourage slow, deep breaths
- ∞ Give quick-relief medication (i.e. albuterol, levalbuterol, pirbuterol), call for help if the medication isn't available
- ∞ Wait 15 minutes to make sure the medication worked, if not call for help

Developed by: Erin Lee

Managing asthma during the summer break

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

After maintaining a hectic pace during the school year, families usually try to slow down and relax during the summer. But there's one thing parents should never relax about – making sure children with asthma get the proper care everyday to control their asthma.

Asthma flare-ups not only make your child uncomfortable, but also can disrupt summer outings for the whole family. With a little advance planning, this can be avoided. Asthma can not be cured but it can be managed so it doesn't control your child and your family.

To control asthma you must:

- Follow a written asthma care plan provided by your child's physician. Share a copy of the plan with summer school, camps, sports, child care providers and any other adults involved in your child's care.
- Take medications as prescribed (even when not experiencing asthma symptoms)
- Avoid asthma triggers
- Treat asthma symptoms early

While at home in the summer daily routines change, which can result in missed medications. When on vacation it may be best to link asthma care with activities that will not be missed, such as breakfast, dinner or bedtime. Some medications must be taken at specific times to be effective.

When planning a vacation, you will need to avoid locations with potential allergens or other asthma triggers. Always make sure you have enough medication with you to control and treat an asthma flare-up.

Developed by: Rhonda Duerst

ON THE GO WITH ALLERGIES AND ASTHMA

Submitted by: Fond du Lac Asthma Management Coalition

During the season of summer individuals spend more time traveling. Individuals with allergies and/or asthma need to plan for the changes in their environment and climate that may affect their allergies or asthma.

Automobiles - Allergens can lurk in the carpeting, upholstery and ventilation systems, so before beginning a lengthy trip turn on the air conditioner and open the windows for 10 minutes before entering the car. This can help to remove dust mites or molds that may be in the system.

If you are allergic to pollen and molds, keep your windows closed and keep the air conditioner on.

Outdoor air pollution is worse in heavy traffic, so to avoid excess pollution plan your travel for early morning or late afternoon hours. Do not allow cigarette smoke in the car. If you use a nebulizer, purchase a portable nebulizer that plugs into the car's cigarette lighter/AC adapter or uses a portable battery pack.

Camping - Camping increases your contact with stinging insects and outdoor pollen. Avoid camping in high pollen seasons and carry injectable epinephrine.

Be cautious when going above 5,000 feet where the amount of available oxygen decreases.

Hotels – Hotel rooms often contain a large concentration of dust mites and molds in mattresses, furniture and carpeting. People allergic to dust mites may want to bring their own plastic-encased pillows and covers or personal bedding.

If you are allergic to pets, ask about the pet policy and request a room that has been pet-free. If you are allergic to molds, request a room away from an indoor pool.

Airplanes – Domestic flights are smoke-free but some international flights on foreign airlines might not be. Make sure you are seated as far away from the smoking section as possible.

If you have severe asthma, and need supplemental oxygen, arrange for it with the airlines before the flight.

If you have food allergies, beware the food may not be allergy free and make sure you have your epinephrine available.

If you have a sinus or ear infection take a short acting oral decongestant or use a nasal decongestant spray one hour before take off. A saline nasal spray used once an hour can keep your nasal membranes moist and keep you more comfortable during and after your flight.

Climate and Seasons – In tropical, damp climates you'll be exposed to allergies such as molds, pollens and mites. In cold, damp climates you may be exposed to more indoor molds and house dust mites. Cold air in frigid, dry environments can also be an irritant for those with asthma. Appropriate precautions can ensure a safer trip.

Darlene Hanke, RN, Fond du Lac County Health Department

Ozone and Air Quality Index

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

Ozone can be good or bad depending on where it is found. Good ozone occurs naturally in the Earth's upper atmosphere where it forms a protective layer that shields us from the sun's harmful UV rays. This beneficial ozone, often referred to as the ozone layer, is gradually being depleted by manmade chemicals. Bad Ozone is found in the Earth's lower atmosphere (our breathing space) high concentrations of ozone are created from our pollution. Ground-level ozone, the main component of smog, is created when the emissions from motor vehicles, factories, motor boats, gas powered lawn equipment, paints and other household products "cook" in the hot summer sun.

Pollution is a concern during summer months when weather conditions needed to form it (lots of sun and hot temperatures) normally occur. To reduce your emissions on an Ozone Action Day, here are several easy ways you can help:

- ∞ **Kick back and relax.** Cut your lawn some other day or at least in the day when it's cooler. It's healthier for you, your lawn and the air.
- ∞ **Refuel in the evening and tighten your gas cap.** Refueling during the evening can prevent gas fumes from baking in the sun and creating ozone. Plus, tightening down your gas cap until it clicks 4-5 times ensures you have properly sealed your gas tank. By tightening down your cap, you are preventing up to 30 gallons of gas from evaporating out of your tank each year.
- ∞ **Conserve energy.** The fossil-fueled power plants that make the electricity you use at your home and work can contribute to poor outdoor air quality. By conserving energy, you can make it easier for power plants to reduce air pollution, in turn saving you money and benefiting the air. So, use energy-efficient light bulbs and appliances, and turn them off when you're not using them. Run dishwashers and clothes washers only when they're full.
- ∞ **Care for your car.** Regular maintenance and tune-ups, changing the oil and checking tire inflation can improve gas mileage, extend your car's life and increase its resale value. It could reduce your car's emissions by more than half!
- ∞ **Plan your trips before you go.** It's easy! Chances are you're already doing it – combining your errands into one trip and listening to the traffic report before you leave home. When you know before you go, you get things done more efficiently, which helps reduce traffic congestion and air pollution. When you first start a car after it has been sitting for more than an hour, it pollutes up to five times more than when the engine is warm.
- ∞ **Take it slow.** Be kind to your engine and your wallet by avoiding jackrabbit starts. Your vehicle will show its appreciation by giving you more mileage on every gallon.

Ozone can cause respiratory problems in healthy people and is especially bad in those people with chronic lung diseases, like asthma. Here are some ways you can breathe easier on an Ozone Action Day:

- ∞ Know before you go. Call the toll-free Daily Air Hotline, 1-866 DAILY AIR, to find out the latest air quality reading in your area;
- ∞ Exercise in the morning or later in the evening, when pollution levels are usually lower;
- ∞ Spend less time participating in vigorous outdoor activities;
- ∞ Take it a little easier when you're outside. Don't overexert yourself;
- ∞ Limit children's prolonged, strenuous outdoor activity; and

- ∞ Pay attention to respiratory symptoms, such as coughing, wheezing and discomfort when you take a deep breath.

Remember, every little bit helps, because it all adds up to cleaner air and healthier lungs.

Predictable Asthma: Knowing the Early Warning Signs

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

Predictable asthma is the easiest to treat. If I know that I will get short of breath when I am around cigarette smoke or that my asthma flares up when I have a cold virus then I am better able to prevent it or deal with it at the time. Knowing what your triggers are and the early warning signs of an asthma flare-up can help reduce stress and empower you to take action to control your asthma.

Asthma is in control when:

- ◆ **No chronic or troublesome symptoms** such coughing, wheezing or breathlessness in the night, early morning, or after exertion. Cough variant asthma with no wheezing is very common in children. Nighttime symptoms are a sign that asthma is not in control.
- ◆ **You can do your usual activities.** If you need to limit what you do because of "breathing problems", your asthma may not be in control. You should be able to maintain normal activity levels including exercise and other physical activities. Pre-treating with a medicine before exercising may be needed.
- ◆ **Flare-ups of asthma are minimized** and there is no need for emergency visits or hospital admissions. Near "normal" lung function is maintained.

Developing a plan to control your asthma that includes trigger management, monitoring for early signs of a flare-up, and a possible controller medication are key to keep your asthma in control.

Early symptoms of an asthma flare up include such things as dark circles under the eyes, itchy throat, cough, tightness in throat or chest. Waking up at night due to asthma, or not feeling up to your regular activities are also possible signs.

When you notice these early warning sign, take action! Follow the action plan you developed with your physician. Possible actions are: take your quick relief medicine (such as albuterol), look for asthma triggers and eliminate them or avoid them, and check your controller medicine to make sure you did not run out of it.

Wheezing and shortness of breath are later signs of an asthma flare-up. Taking quick relief medicine every 20 minutes for up to one hour, or until symptoms go away is usually necessary. Consider using a nebulizer at home. If the symptoms are not better within an hour further action is needed. See your action plan or call your doctor.

The earlier you notice a flare-up the easier it is to treat. Knowing what usually triggers your asthma flare-ups and how to treat a flare-up when it happens are skills that can be learned. These skills help you predict and manage your asthma, and can significantly reduce your stress and improve your quality of life.

By Kathy Levac RN MS, mother of two children with asthma and nurse educator with Health & Wellness Enterprises LLC.

Secondhand Smoke

Submitted by: Fond du Lac Asthma Management Coalition

Secondhand smoke is harmful to you and your children. Secondhand smoke is defined as the smoke given off by the burning end of a cigarette, cigar or pipe and the smoke exhaled from the lungs of smokers.

Facts about secondhand smoke:

- ∞ Nine out of 10 Americans are exposed to secondhand smoke at least every 2-3days.
- ∞ A cigarette burns for approximately 12 minutes, but smokers usually only inhale for 30 seconds. That means 11 minutes and 30 seconds cigarettes are giving off secondhand smoke for us to breathe
- ∞ From breathing secondhand smoke children have more health related problems including bronchitis, pneumonia, ear infections and aggravation of their asthma.
- ∞ 53,000 nonsmokers die every year from secondhand smoke (That's more than murder, drugs and AIDS combined).
- ∞ For every 8 smokers the tobacco industry kills, it takes 1 nonsmoker with them.
- ∞ There is no SAFE level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

Those most affected by secondhand smoke are children. Exposure to the poisons in secondhand smoke puts children in danger of severe respiratory problems, because their bodies are still developing. Help protect your family's life and health by making your home smoke free.

Janet Lloyd, RN, Fond du Lac School Health Programs

September

Submitted by: Fight Asthma Milwaukee (FAM) Allies

"It's the great pumpkin Charlie Brown!" Yes, it is pumpkin farm and hayride time again. If your child(ren) has an allergy to mold, you might notice that after the trip to the pumpkin farm or that hayride that they are having more allergy symptoms. This is due to the larger amounts of mold being present in the wet ground and in hay bales. FAM Allies encourages you to let your child(ren) continue with normal activities, but be aware that there may be more sneezing and watery eyes. Another reminder is that it is now ragweed season until we see that frost on the "great pumpkin"! Happy Hunting!!

Developed by: Karen Jones, CHHS Asthma/Allergy