

## ASTHMA

Nine million children and nearly 11 million adults have asthma, a chronic lung disease. An asthma attack is triggered by pollutants such as:

- **Dust mites** living in mattresses, pillows, carpet, furniture, bedcovers, clothes and stuffed toys.
- **Pest** droppings or body parts of cockroaches or rodents.
- **Mold**, which grows where moisture is present.
- **Pets'** skin flakes, urine and saliva.
- **Irritants** such as perfumes and air pollution.
- **Secondhand smoke** from burning cigarettes, pipes, cigars and exhaled smoke.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Wisconsin Lung Association  
(800) LUNGUSA  
[www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)

Wisconsin Maternal and Child Health Hotline  
(800) 722-2295

Wisconsin Poison Center  
1-800-222-1222  
[www.wisconsinpoison.org](http://www.wisconsinpoison.org)

*Special thanks to Pinellas County Public Health Department.*

Take  
**CONTROL**  
with a safe  
environment



Infant  
Death  
Center  
of Wisconsin

MS C630A, PO Box 1997, Milwaukee, WI 53201-1997  
(414) 266-2743 . Fax (414) 266-3338 . [www.idcw.org](http://www.idcw.org)

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## Below are ways you can take control of your environment

- Be sure to take your asthma medicine as prescribed.
- Keep pets away from bedrooms, furniture and carpeting.
- Don't smoke in your home or car, or let anyone smoke around you.
- Wash sheets, blankets and toys once a week in hot water.
- Get rid of pests. Keep all food or garbage contained. Keep living spaces clean.
- Wash mold off and dry excess water completely. Replace ceiling tiles and carpet if needed. Make sure leaky plumbing is fixed.
- Lower moisture levels to reduce other triggers, such as dust mites and cockroaches.

## FIRE SAFETY

Smoke alarms save lives. Make sure your home has working smoke alarms and replace the batteries twice a year. Plan and practice a fire escape route with your family.



## POISON PREVENTION

Learn how poisonings occur, how to prevent poisonings and how to provide a safer environment.

- Call Wisconsin Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 for information about potential poisons.
- Do a periodic home safety check.
- Store hazardous materials safely.

### Take control of your environment

- Assure paint with lead is contained or removed and safely disposed of.
- Do not allow your children to play near windows, porches or other structures built before 1978 that have chipping or peeling paint.
- Install smoke detectors and assure they are in working condition.
- Keep your home well-ventilated, even in winter.
- Have your home heating system inspected each winter.
- Have fuel-burning home appliances checked to make sure they are working properly.
- Contact your local health department for help creating a safe home.

## LEAD POISONING

Homes built before 1978 likely contain lead-based paint. Children who play near windows, porches or other areas of the home with chipping or peeling paint can get lead dust on their fingers and toys. When the dust gets into their mouths, it enters the bloodstream.

### Permanent health problems in young children caused by lead poisoning include:

- Reading and learning disabilities.
- Behavior problems.
- Impaired hearing.
- Kidney damage and slowed growth.

The only way to know if a child has lead poisoning is to have a blood test. Have children tested. If the test is positive, have your child treated for lead poisoning.

