

It's A Personal Responsibility

Like many chronic conditions, appropriate asthma care requires routine health care visits, pharmacological treatment to effectively manage and control symptoms, and an environment that minimizes exposure to asthma triggers. Uncontrolled asthma can lead to emergency department visits, inpatient hospitalizations and even death.

To keep asthma controlled, someone with asthma should see their health care provider once every 3 to 12 months, even when they are feeling well, and more often when experiencing breathing problems.

75% of Wisconsin adults with asthma reported experiencing symptoms in the past 30 days.

Only **52%** reported having a routine health care visit for their asthma in the past twelve months.

Only **40%** reported taking a prescription medication daily to prevent and asthma attack.
(Burden of Asthma in Wisconsin 2007)

Asthma Action Plan

Anyone diagnosed with asthma should have a **written asthma action plan**. A written asthma action plan should be on hand and easily accessible at all times. Here are some benefits to having a written asthma action plan.

- ✓ It provides all necessary information in one document, such as specific medications the person should take, what to do in an emergency, and emergency contacts and phone numbers.
- ✓ It records an individual's peak flow information and describes what to do when the individual with asthma is in a specific zone, which is crucial to asthma management.
- ✓ It provides a tangible way for the individual with asthma and physician to work together on asthma management.



- ✓ Individuals with written asthma action plans have fewer emergency room visits and hospitalizations and improved lung function.
- ✓ It provides a way for good communication between an individual with asthma and those around him/her (family members, co-workers, coaches, child care providers).
- ✓ It provides quick information in case of an emergency.

Asthma Medications

Asthma medications are essential to asthma management. They are important in both **preventing** an asthma episode from occurring and in **treating** an asthma attack already underway.



Controller Medications

- ◆ Reduce inflammation and **prevent** asthma attacks.
- ◆ Take daily, even when feeling well.
- ◆ Side effects can include a hoarse voice and yeast infection in the mouth, but this can be prevented by using a holding chamber and rinsing mouth after use of medication.
- ◆ Controller medications will not help during an asthma attack or in emergencies.

Quick Relief Medications

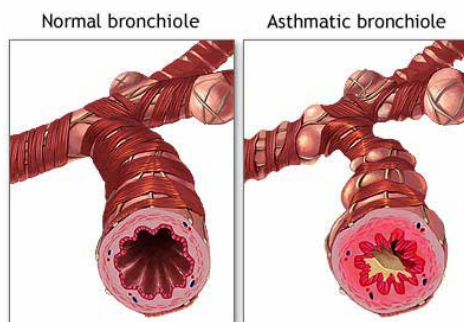
- ◆ Relieve narrowing of the airways and designed for quick relief (**treatment**) during an asthma attack.
- ◆ Should be used when symptoms first appear and/or before exercise, as indicated by a health care provider.
- ◆ Take on an as-needed basis to relieve symptoms.
- ◆ Oral steroids are taken short-term (3 to 10 days) to treat severe asthma attacks. An oral steroid (like prednisone) begins to work in 6 to 24 hours to decrease swelling in the lungs.

Will you take 2 minutes to answer 11 questions to help us better understand the learning needs of our readers? Click here to take survey

Or cut and paste this link into your browser:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=P5qpMzZiO5Sig871zBf6ww_3d_3d

What is Asthma?



Asthma is a long-standing (chronic) disease where a person's airways are oversensitive and inflamed. During an asthma attack, the airway lining (bronchiole) becomes inflamed, swells and makes more mucus. This narrows the airways and reduces the air flow. The muscles around the airways also tighten and decreases air flow even more.



For more information contact the Marathon County Asthma Coalition at 715-261-1900.