

Vermont Asthma Program

Helping Vermonters

Breathe Easier

March 2014

Hello and welcome to the March edition of our Asthma Newsletter!

With spring arriving sometime this month (hopefully), so too will new allergens, both indoors and outdoors. This month, the Vermont Healthy Homes Program reminds us how mold can affect not only asthma severity, but overall health. We are also introducing a new School Health and Asthma section and convenient ways to stay on top of air quality forecasts.

Additionally, in collaboration with the Blueprint for Health, the Asthma Program is going into its third Asthma Learning Collaborative. The aim of the Learning Collaborative model is to support practice level change aimed at quality improvement, overall practice efficiency, and patient health outcomes.

How you can help: We are looking for case studies that address assessing asthma control and severity, conducting plan visits, reducing environmental asthma triggers, and patient success stories. If you have any to share, please contact Jane.

March is *National Nutrition Month*



Both diet and nutrition have the potential to affect asthma symptoms. Fruits and vegetables are a good source of antioxidants, which could reduce lung swelling and irritation. Sulfites and other allergy-triggering foods lead to asthma symptoms. Be sure to take in vitamin D, as it is common for those with severe asthma to be deficient. Finally, maintain a healthy weight because being overweight can worsen asthma and worsen symptoms. (MayoClinic)

Asthma and Environmental Health: Spotlight on Healthy Homes

Mold is a type of fungus that is present in our natural environment. It grows almost anywhere as long as there's organic material, water or moisture, oxygen, light and the right temperature. Health effects can vary greatly depending on the person and the amount of mold in their home. Symptoms that may occur include coughing, wheezing, nasal and throat conditions. If you have asthma or allergies, you may notice that your symptoms worsen. You can find mold by using your eyes and your nose. If you see mold or if there is an earthy or musty smell, you should assume a mold problem exists.

To clean up and remove indoor mold growth, follow steps 1-5 as they apply to your home.

1. Identify and fix moisture problems.

Upcoming Events

*Asthma Advisory Panel Meeting: April 11

*[Certified Asthma Educator Institute](#): June 30-July 1

Asthma Surveillance

We are pleased to introduce our new asthma analyst, Maria Roemhildt, Ph.D.

We want to hear from you!

Please take part in the Asthma Program's [survey](#). This survey is designed to better understand our stakeholders' awareness of the Asthma Program's data and data outputs, use of the Asthma Program's data and data outputs, and needs for additional data or data outputs, including preferred formats and channels of delivery.

Did you know?

A major goal of the 2013-2018 Asthma State Plan is to support policies aimed at nutrition education and physical activity promotion. Our 2018 goal is to increase from 29% to 33% the consumption of at least five (5) servings of fruit and vegetables per day among adults and youth with asthma.

Fact Sheets

[Asthma Trigger Tracker and Key Questions](#)

Publications

2. Dry any wet materials.
3. Remove and dispose of mold-contaminated materials.
4. Clean surfaces (you can use warm soapy water).
5. Disinfect surfaces (optional).

[Learn More](#)

Air Quality and Asthma

Air quality is an important asthma trigger to consider. Exposure to poor air quality may lead to asthma exacerbations and hospitalizations, impaired lung function and lung function growth, and increased respiratory symptoms. Subscribe to [EnviroFlash](#) to receive daily local air quality forecasts. Check out your air quality with American Lung Association's [State of the Air report](#).

DISEASES AND HEALTH PROBLEMS
LINKED TO SMOKING

1 OUT OF 3 CANCER DEATHS COULD BE PREVENTED

SMOKING CAUSES CANCER

— IN THE —
 LUNGS • TRACHEA
 BRONCHUS • ESOPHAGUS
 ORAL CAVITY • LIP
 NASOPHARYNX
 NASAL CAVITY • LARYNX
 STOMACH • BLADDER
 PANCREAS • KIDNEY
 LIVER • UTERINE CERVIX
 COLON AND RECTUM
 AND CAUSES LEUKEMIA

Smoking can cause cancer almost anywhere in the body.

LUNG
KIDNEY
PANCREAS
LIVER
BLADDER
COLON

CDC **VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

School Health and Asthma

A letter outlining the new standardized questions (from a CDC validated module) that will be included in the School Nurse Survey beginning in the 2014-2015 school year was sent out to all school nurses. Although similar

[Vermont State Asthma Plan](#)

[The Burden of Asthma in Vermont](#)

[Healthy Vermonters 2020](#)

Quick Links

[VDH Asthma Program](#)

[Controlling Asthma](#)

[Tools for Managing Asthma](#)

[Asthma Surveillance](#)

[Resources & Information](#)

[Envision Program](#)



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WE CAN HELP.**

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questions have been asked by all school nurses in the past, data collection was done in a non-standardized manner. We are looking forward to this new data set and will use it to better inform our interventions at the school level. Special thanks to the Division of Maternal and Child Health for working so hard on this initiative.

The Asthma Program works closely with Environmental Health and its Envision Program. The Envision Program was designed to create and maintain a healthier school environment. To view the complete findings from the 2012-2013 Envision survey, please click [here](#). Special thanks to Chris Zuidema, Envision Coordinator, for his hard work on this.

Please keep in touch!

Let us know if you have any questions -- or if there's an asthma-related issue you'd like to know more about.

Take care,

Jane

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