



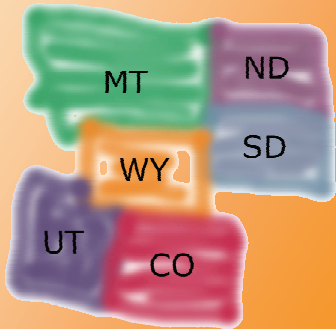
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit

A Network of Experts in Children's Environmental Health

Denver Health & Hospital/ Rocky Mountain Poison & Drug Center/ National Jewish Medical & Research Center, Denver, CO

Asthma Information & Resources

The Rocky Mountain Region Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit serves Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.



Who Gets Asthma?

About 17 million people in the U.S. have asthma, including 4.8 million children. Asthma is a common disease in children, and rates are rising in young children. Asthma is the most common chronic childhood disease and is the #1 reason for missing school. Each year more than 10 million school days are missed due to asthma.

What is Asthma?

Asthma is a chronic or long-term disease, which can be life threatening. Asthma causes breathing problems. The airways in the lungs become blocked, causing the lungs to receive less air. Symptoms of asthma include difficulty with breathing, tightness in the chest, coughing and wheezing. Asthma may make it hard to play or exercise. Asthma can be treated so that breathing problems or wheezing during activities do not occur.

What Triggers Asthma Attacks?

Asthma attacks are caused by something that bothers the lungs. These are called asthma triggers. Asthma triggers are found indoors and outdoors. There are many asthma triggers and each person with asthma has different triggers. Since Americans spend most of their time indoors, exposure to indoor asthma triggers play a role in caring for the disease. The five most common indoor asthma triggers are second hand smoke, pets, mold, dust mites and cockroaches.

Relieving Indoor Environmental Asthma Triggers

● Second hand smoke

- ◆ Do not smoke around your children or allow others to do so. Also, do not smoke or allow smoking in your home or car.
- ◆ Avoid areas where people are smoking.

● Pets

- ◆ Skin flakes and saliva from pets can be asthma trigger.
- ◆ If a child with asthma is allergic to a pet, it is best to find a new home for the pet.
- ◆ If you cannot find a new home for the pet, keep the pet out of the child's bedroom and off of furniture and carpeting. Bathing the pet on a regular basis can also help.

Relieving Indoor Environmental Asthma Triggers (continued)

● Molds

- ◆ Exposure to mold can be an asthma trigger.
- ◆ If you have mold growth, clean it up. For hard surfaces clean with a mixture of bleach and water. Materials that are absorbent may have to be replaced.
- ◆ Fix sources of moisture, such as leaky plumbing.
- ◆ Use exhaust fans in kitchens and bathrooms.

● Pests (cockroaches and rodents)

- ◆ Pest droppings and body parts can be asthma triggers.
- ◆ Keep your home clean. Do not leave out food or garbage. Clean any food crumbs or spills right away.
- ◆ Get rid of pests. Try using poison bait or traps before using pesticide sprays.
- ◆ If sprays are used, carefully follow the instructions on the label and keep the person with asthma out of the room.

● Dust Mites (you can't see them, but they live in mattresses, pillows, carpeting, furniture with fabric and stuffed toys)

- ◆ Wash bedding once a week in hot water
- ◆ Remove carpeting, especially in the bedroom.
- ◆ Choose washable stuffed toys and wash them often in hot water.
- ◆ Use an allergy proof cover for mattresses and pillows.

Other Asthma Triggers...

- ◆ Viral colds and flu
- ◆ Exercise
- ◆ Cold Air
- ◆ Dry Air
- ◆ House Dust
- ◆ Chemicals
- ◆ Strong odors
- ◆ Perfumes
- ◆ Smoke from Fireplaces or wood burning stoves
- ◆ Ozone
- ◆ Pollen
- ◆ Emotions and Stress

Need More Information on Asthma?

Your child's doctor is the best source for information about your child's asthma.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Indoor Air Quality and Asthma
www.epa.gov/iaq
1-800-438-4318

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
www.aafa.org
1-800-7-ASTHMA

National Jewish Medical & Research Center
www.njc.org
LUNG-LINE 1-800-222-LUNG

Allergy and Asthma Network
Mothers of Asthmatics, Inc.
www.aanma.org
1-800-878-4403

American Lung Association
www.ala.org
1-800-LUNG-USA

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
www.aaaai.org

Nicotine Anonymous
www.nicotine-anonylous.org
1-415-750-0328

CALL ANYTIME FREE!
1-877-800-5554

Rocky Mountain Pediatric Environmental Health Line

