

May is National Asthma Awareness Month

What is Asthma?

Asthma is a serious, sometimes life-threatening chronic respiratory disease that affects the quality of life for almost 25 million Americans, including an estimated 7 million children. Although there is no cure for asthma yet, asthma can be controlled through medical treatment and management of environmental triggers.

Asthma Triggers

Americans spend up to 90 percent of their time indoors. Indoor allergens and irritants play a significant role in triggering asthma attacks. Triggers are things that can cause asthma symptoms, an episode or attack or make asthma worse. If you have asthma, you may react to just one trigger or you may find that several things act as triggers. Some triggers include:

- ✓ Second hand smoke
- ✓ Dust mites
- ✓ Molds
- ✓ Cockroaches and pests
- ✓ Pets
- ✓ Nitrogen Dioxide
- ✓ Chemical Irritants
- ✓ Outdoor Air Pollution
- ✓ Wood Smoke

Asthma continues to be a serious public health problem. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- ✓ Almost 25 million people, including almost 7 million children, have asthma.
- ✓ Asthma prevalence is higher among persons with family income below the poverty level.
- ✓ Almost 13 million people report having an asthma attack in the past year.
- ✓ Asthma accounts for over 15 million physician office and hospital outpatient department visits, 4 and nearly 2 million emergency department visits each year.

Asthma in Children

- ✓ Asthma is one of the most common serious chronic diseases of childhood.
- ✓ Asthma is the third-ranking cause of hospitalization among children under 15.
- ✓ An average of one out of every 10 school-aged children has asthma.
- ✓ 10.5 million School days are missed each year due to asthma.

BY: EPA

Preventing Asthma Attacks

Step 1 - Talk to a doctor

Talk to a doctor about your asthma. If you have asthma or if you think you may have asthma, see your doctor. Your doctor will work with you to keep you from having asthma attacks.

- ✓ Learn what triggers your asthma attacks.
- ✓ Identify asthma triggers in your home.
- ✓ Talk about ways to get rid of triggers in your home.
- ✓ Find out what medicine you should take.

Step 2 - Make a Plan

Ask your doctor to help you create your Asthma Action Plan. Work with your doctor to create an Asthma Action Plan that will help you learn to prevent your asthma attacks. An **Asthma Action Plan** will help you control your asthma on a regular basis.

Step 3 - Asthma-Proof Your Home

Triggers are a part of everyday life. Asthma attacks can be triggered by things like mold growing on your shower curtain or tiny dust mites that live in blankets, pillows, or your child's stuffed animals. Learn more about things that might trigger an asthma attack and what you can do to get rid of them.

Recipe of the Month

Cucumber Pineapple Salad

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2/3 cup rice wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 cup fresh pineapple, peeled, cored & cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 1 cucumber, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 carrot, peeled and julienne
- 1/3 cup thinly sliced red onion
- 4 cups torn salad greens
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted



Directions

In a heavy saucepan, bring the sugar, vinegar and water to a boil. Stir constantly until reduced to about 1/2 cup, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and place in the refrigerator until cool. Add the pineapple. Cover and return to the refrigerator for 1 hour. Add the cucumbers, carrots and red onions to the pineapple mixture. Toss well. To serve, divide the salad greens among the plates. Top with the pineapple mixture and sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds. Serve immediately.

Interested in learning additional *healthy* lifestyle tips?
Contact a Care Manager today by calling toll-free 877-396-1402.