

# Asthma Insider

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## CLINIC CORNER

With the help of his staff, Dr. Paul Ferreira has been working to get all new and established patients at Intermountain Holladay Pediatrics enrolled and using the eAsthma Tracker. He said, "Families really appreciate the interaction and feedback, especially when patients are in the red or yellow zones."

Whenever a patient falls into the yellow or red zone, he asks to see them in the clinic to determine the best care plan.

He shares printed materials about the eAsthma Tracker with patients and their families, and it has been helpful to have a

designated nurse call families to help them enroll.

Dr. Ferreira believes that using the eAsthma Tracker has helped his patients become more actively involved in managing their asthma.

He said it is especially helpful to get parents thinking about their child's asthma on a weekly basis. He finds the tracker very useful in treating his patients with asthma.

*Paul J. Ferreira, M.D.*



**Paul J. Ferreira, M.D**

**"Families appreciate the interaction"**

## FACEBOOK PAGE

**Did you know that it is important to prime your asthma inhaler?**

Priming consists of shaking and spraying the first four sprays in the air away from your face. This is also referred to as burning off rounds. All new inhalers must be primed. Also, if you go more than two weeks without using your inhaler or dropping drop you inhaler you should reprime it. Priming insures that you are getting the proper metered dose out of your inhaler. For more prime advice, shoot over to our Facebook page and see what you're "misting" out on.

*by Stacey Riding*

It's 2016! A new year with new resolutions is ahead. The best promise to make this year is to stay healthy by keeping your asthma under control. To help you with this goal we have compiled a list of things you might not know about your asthma.

# Did You Know

**...over 20 million people suffer from asthma?** And that number is on the rise! More than 50 billion dollars in health care is spent on asthma around the world, and the cause of 10 million children missing school days—and that's in one year!

**...first and secondhand smoke can cause severe asthma attacks?** And if you have a severe attack, chances are higher you'll have another one in the future, so it's important to keep in touch with your doctor.

**...relying on albuterol inhalers as the only asthma treatment may contribute to attacks?** Albuterol alone does not manage chronic inflammation of the airways. If you need your rescue medication three or more times a week, your asthma may not be under control. An asthma tracker plan can help with this problem.

**...when children grow up with a dog or cat, the chances of developing asthma are reduced?** Dogs and cats expose children to more germs and bacteria, which helps their immune system adapt to the allergic reactions. But, of course, if your child is already allergic to dogs and cats, they can trigger your child's asthma symptoms.

**...if your child had eczema as a baby, they are at a higher risk for developing asthma symptoms?** Contrary to popular belief, a condition that affects the skin can also affect the airways, said Dr. Welch, an editor in-chief from the American Academy of Pediatrics, in *The Guide to Allergies and Asthma*. Children with eczema usually develop allergies followed by asthma. Skin or blood tests can be helpful in finding out if your child has allergies, and if you treat it early with immunotherapy (allergy shots), it can lessen the chances of developing it.

**...certain medications like acetaminophen and ibuprofen can also set off asthma triggers?** Unfortunately some cures can come with curses. Regular visits to your family doctor and having an Asthma Action Plan can go a long way.

Having an Asthma Tracker Program can keep us all ahead in the game because this is one race we should all try to stay in front of. Second place isn't worth it; we need to gain the lead and keep it. We shouldn't end up breathing hard just to breathe easy.

*By Stacey Riding*



You should clean your child's spacer weekly as well as before using it the first time and after an illness. Even with regular cleaning the spacer may become cloudy after a time. Never wash your child's spacer in the dishwasher.

Take the spacer with you to asthma appointments every 6-12 months to have a doctor or nurse ensure that it is still intact and working properly.

# How to Care for Your Spacer

## TO CLEAN YOUR SPACER

**Step 1:** Remove the flexible rubber piece on the back and take the cap off the mouthpiece.



**Step 2:** Fill a bowl or the sink with lukewarm water and a drop or two of mild dishwashing soap.

**Step 3:** Soak the parts of the disassembled spacer for 15 minutes. Gently agitate the water off and on during this time.

**Step 4:** Gently rinse in a bowl of clean warm water.

**Step 5:** Gently shake parts of disassembled spacer to remove excess water.

**Step 6:** Let the spacer air dry in a vertical position. DO NOT dry it with towels.

**Step 7:** Once the spacer is completely dry, reassemble.

By Lis Malmgren

References:

<http://www.asthma.ca/adults/treatment/spacers.php>

<http://www.nationalasthma.org.au/publication/spacer-use-and-care>



# Helping Children Understand and Manage Asthma

Once children are old enough, it's a good idea to talk about asthma together and make a plan for when symptoms worsen. Together, with caregivers and doctors, you form a health care team that will help your child manage his or her asthma.

By age five, most Children are becoming more aware of their surroundings and themselves. This can be a good age to bring up the subject.

be as simple as "Sit down, stay calm, and ask a grownup for help."

When children get into tweens and teens, they may resent anything that sets them apart from their peers. It can be helpful for them to understand they aren't alone with their asthma. They also need to understand the importance of being compliant with medications. They may be ready to manage

**No matter what your child's age, there are ways to manage the stress of asthma:**

- **Be encouraging.** Unless otherwise instructed by a doctor, don't limit physical activity. Encourage normal play and focus on what your child can do.
- **Talk to other parents and kids with asthma.** Connecting with others will help you both realize that you aren't alone. You can share tips and stories, and you might even make a few new friends!
- **Keep records** (like the eAsthma Tracker) and, when symptoms worsen, remember that your health care team can help.
- **Stay proactive** and call the doctor when your child's symptoms fall into the yellow zone.

*By Jordan Gaddis*

## IF YOU'D LIKE TO LEARN MORE

If you'd like to learn more or get help, there are plenty of resources available from your doctor, the Web, books—even your health insurance company, who may have care managers for children with asthma. Two well-known organizations include the American Lung Association

(lung.org) and American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, & Immunology (aaaai.org). And don't forget to find out what's available in your state—the Utah Department of Health (health.utah.gov/asthma) provides programs and resources for those with asthma.

Explain how lungs work, and what happens during an asthma attack. Talk about how medicine helps those with asthma feel better. Tell your child why you go to the doctor and how a doctor can help you make an asthma action plan. Triggers can be a good thing to explain, too—like how exercise, illness, allergies, and weather can cause your child's asthma to worsen. Finally, help your child understand what to do when he or she is having trouble breathing. This may

their asthma and administer their own medications. Make sure they are comfortable asking for help during an asthma attack and informing coaches, teachers, and friends about their asthma and how to handle it if an attack occurs. Encourage them to stay on top of whether they are in the green, yellow, or red zone. Using the eAsthma Tracker can empower them to do this on their own, and will help you be informed at the next doctor's visit.

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- Mayo Clinic Staff. "Childhood Asthma: Coping and Support." Mayo Clinic. Web. 9 Jan. 2016. <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/childhood-asthma/basics/coping-support/con-20028628>
- Pongdee, Thanai MD. "Teaching Your Child About Asthma." American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, & Immunology. Web. 9 Jan. 2016. <http://www.aaaai.org/conditions-and-treatments/library/asthma-library/teaching-your-child-about-asthma.aspx>

# The History of Asthma

## Asthma: What Does It Mean?

Asthma is a Greek word meaning "to pant, to exhale with the mouth open." Hippocrates, author of The Corpus Hippocraticum, quoted the word "asthma" in his book and this was the earliest text of the word back in 460-360 BC.

Asthma symptoms were discovered in Egypt in the 1870s due to the dusty winds that the Egyptians encountered. Their way of treating it was to roast herbs and sun-dried stems on heated bricks and inhale the fumes, the early form of an inhalant.

Some clinicians went so far as to treat asthma with owls' blood, describing asthma as a bronchial obstruction; this is considered to be one of the first forms of a liquid suppressant.

Moses Maimonides was a physician who traveled from Spain, Morocco and Egypt practicing medicine in 1135-1204 A.D. Maimonides noted that in the areas that had rather cold and wet months, asthma symptoms in patients started out as the common cold, heavy breathing and coughing up phlegm, but noted the improvements took place in the dryer months.

Bernardino Ramazzini, the father of sports medicine, coined the term "exercise-induced asthma." This means that people with asthma shouldn't exercise, right? Of course not! That's a myth. Asthma doesn't necessarily have to limit a person's activities. Camps, exercise, and sports can all be made possible by having a proper medication regime or an asthma action plan. As a matter of fact, regular exercise can improve lung

function while helping maintain a healthy weight, reducing the risk of asthma attacks.

During the 1930s-1950s, it was said that asthma was mental and that the cure was merely therapeutic talking. When it was disproven, in the late 1950's, Primatene and Isuprel were made available as well as Prednisone.

Asthma is not a mental disorder. It's been said that 95% of children with asthma will always have symptoms, so you can't run from this disease nor can you cure it, only contain it.

People even go as far as to think if their children aren't wheezing, they don't have asthma. That's also another wonderful myth.

Asthma wasn't recognized as an inflammatory disease until the 1960s when the medications such as Alupent and Becotide, a corticosteroid inhaler, followed by other inhalants designed to cut down on heart stimulation, were

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## THE HISTORY OF ASTHMA CONT.

available. These kinds of medicines are not habit forming but may be needed long term to manage your asthma. Your body cannot become immune to asthma medications. Stronger dosages may be needed, which is why it's important to keep in touch with your doctor.

Another myth is that a cold and the flu have nothing to do with asthma. Others also feel a flu shot isn't good for asthmatics, but it is quite the opposite. The Center for Disease Control recommends them because it actually puts asthmatics at a lower risk

for attacks. Inflamed airways are sensitive to allergens and germs, dust, pollen and pet dander are linked to at least 50% of asthma triggers. That's why it's important to follow up with doctor visits, and have some kind of asthma action plan or tracker.

Having this disease can seem almost unbearable at times. Staying away from triggers and taking your medication regularly can help keep it under control. So all those extracurricular activities that you or your kids want to partake in, don't let your condition stop you. Running, jumping, or swimming; the

sky is the limit. Just a note, indoor swimming pools can have a higher risk of asthma flare ups because of the chlorine chemicals that fills the air and into the lungs.

We've come a long way from burnt leaves and owls blood to the controlling medications we have now, and they keep getting better. We now have better medications, doctors, action plans and asthma tracker plans. Welcome to the future on the history of asthma!

*By Stacey Riding*