IF YOU HAVE A CHILD WITH ASTHMA, YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

Asthma is a chronic disease which causes ongoing swelling of the airways. When certain triggers such as dust, smog, pet dander or secondhand smoke enter the airways, they may become irritated and constricted. This makes it difficult to breathe. If you have a child with asthma, you're not alone. More than 20 million people in the U.S. have asthma, including 7 million children. However, there's good news. You can help manage your child's asthma and help prevent their attacks before they happen.

HOW TO MANAGE YOUR CHILD'S INDOOR ENVIRONMENT

Americans spend about 90% of their time indoors. So, managing your child's indoor environment is an important step in reducing exposure to the things that can trigger asthma attacks. Asthma triggers vary from person to person. You and your doctor should determine a plan to reduce the triggers that most affect your child. Listed below are several common indoor environmental triggers and some actions you can take to reduce your child's exposure.

SECONDHAND SMOKE

Asthma can be triggered by the smoke from the burning end of a cigarette, pipe, or cigar, or the smoke breathed out by a smoker.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Choose not to smoke in your home or car, and do not allow others to do so either.

PETS

Your pet's skin flakes, urine, and saliva can be asthma triggers.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Consider keeping pets outdoors or even finding a new home for your pets, if necessary. Keep pets out of the bedroom and other sleeping areas at all times, and keep the door closed. Keep pets away from fabric-covered furniture, carpets and stuffed toys.

DUST MITES

Dust mites are too small to be seen, but are found in every home. They live in mattresses, pillows, carpets, fabric-covered furniture, bedcovers, clothes, and stuffed toys.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Wash sheets and blankets once a week in hot water. Choose washable stuffed toys, wash them often in hot water, and dry thoroughly. Keep stuffed toys off beds. Cover mattresses and pillows in dust-proof (allergen-impermeable) zippered covers.

PESTS

Droppings or body parts of pests such as cockroaches or rodents can be asthma triggers.

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WHAT YOU CAN DO: Do not leave food or garbage out. Store food in airtight containers. Clean all food crumbs or spilled liquids right away. Try using poison baits, boric acid (for cockroaches), or traps first before using pesticide sprays. If sprays are used, limit the spray to the infested area. Carefully follow instructions on the label. Make sure there is plenty of fresh air when you spray, and keep the person with asthma out of the room.

MOLDS

Molds grow on damp materials. The key to mold control is moisture control. If mold is a problem in your home, clean up the mold and get rid of excess water or moisture. Lowering the moisture also helps reduce other triggers, such as dust mites and cockroaches.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Wash mold off hard surfaces and dry completely. Absorbent materials with mold, such as ceiling tiles and carpet, may need to be replaced. Fix leaky plumbing or other sources of water. Use exhaust fans or open windows in kitchens and bathrooms when showering, cooking, or using the dishwasher. Vent clothes dryers to the outside. Maintain low indoor humidity, ideally between 30-50%.

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To find help in your community, contact:

Asthma & Allergy Network Mothers of Asthmatics
(800) 878-4403
www.aanma.org

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
1-800-727-8462
www.aafa.org

American Lung Association
1-800-586-4872
www.lungusa.org

To learn more about asthma, visit:

US Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov/asthma
www.airnow.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/asthma
1-800-CDC-info

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KEYS TO PREVENTING YOUR CHILD'S ATTACK

- Work with a doctor to develop a written *Asthma Management Plan* that's right for you and your child.
- Learn what triggers your child's asthma and eliminate or reduce your child's exposure to those allergens and irritants.
- Make sure your child takes medications as prescribed and tell your doctor if there are any problems.
- Keep a daily symptom diary and use a peak flow meter every day to monitor your child's progress.

WHAT IS AN ASTHMA MANAGEMENT PLAN?

Written details by your physician should include:

- A list of your child's asthma triggers
- Instructions for using asthma medication(s)
- Instructions for using a daily symptom diary and peak flow meter
- Details about how to stop an asthma attack or episode in progress
- Instructions for when to call the doctor

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ACP
PO Box 42510
Cincinnati, OH 45242

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"WHEN I HAVE AN ASTHMA ATTACK I FEEL LIKE A FISH WITH NO WATER."

–JESSE, AGE 5

You know how to react to their asthma attacks. Here's how to prevent them.

EVEN ONE ATTACK IS ONE TOO MANY