**What is Asthma?**

- Chronic inflammatory disorder of the airways
- Usually reversible
- Not yet curable
- Manageable
- Not contagious

**What does an asthma episode feel like?**

- Jog in place for 2 minutes.
- Place a straw in your mouth, and breathe only through the straw by pinching your nose closed.

**How do you feel?**

**What happens during an asthma episode?**

Airways narrow, caused by
- A tightening of the muscles that surround the airways
- A swelling of the inner lining
- An increase in mucus production

**Asthma Symptoms**

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Chest tightness
- Shortness of breath

**Asthma Triggers**

Indoor environmental triggers
- Secondhand smoke, molds, dust mites, cockroaches, pets

**What to Do**

- Take medication.
- Monitor peak flow.
- Consult with your physician.
- Reduce or avoid environmental triggers.

**Where to Go for Help**

Contact your local doctor, pharmacist, or county Extension agent.
Asthma may develop at any time and at any stage of the life cycle. Over 35 percent of asthma sufferers are children. It is the most common chronic disease among children today.

- Six percent of the Alabama population have asthma.
- Eight million children under the age of 18 have asthma in America.
- Asthma causes more hospital stays than any other childhood disease.
- Asthma is the cause of more than 10 million lost school days every year.
- Annual medical bills for children with asthma are higher.
- Cost for lost workdays of parents with asthmatic children is near $1 billion.

With all the problems associated with asthma, there is some good news. Simple things can be done at home to help minimize the disease, and following a management plan will make a difference.

For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in the telephone directory under your county’s name to find the number, or check the Extension Web site http://www.aces.edu and click on County Offices to find your county.

The Healthy Homes Partnership
http://www.healthyhomespartnership.net

American Lung Association
http://www.lungusa.org

Healthy Indoor Air for America's Homes
http://www.healthindooraqair.org

EPA–Indoor Air Quality
http://www.epa.gov/iaq/asthma

The Soap and Detergent Association
http://www.cleaning101.com

Allergy & Asthma Network
Mothers of Asthmatics
http://www.aanma.org

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