

require hospitalization or interfere with family life, physical activity, or school attendance. The nursing process in the care of the child with asthma is outlined in the Nursing Care Plan box.

Nurses may perform a variety of functions in asthma care. These may include asthma education in the primary care setting and in schools and other community settings, care of the child with asthma in the acute care setting, ambulatory care, care coordination, and intensive care. Nurses also obtain information on how asthma affects the child's everyday activities and self-concept, the child's and family's adherence to the prescribed therapy, and their personal treatment goals. Every effort is made to build a partnership between the child and family and the health care team, and effective communication is an essential part of this partnership. In particular, the child and family's satisfaction with asthma control and with the quality of care should be assessed. The nurse should also assess the child and family's perception of the severity of the disease and their level of social support.

One of the major emphases of nursing care is outpatient management by the family. Parents are taught how to prevent exacerbations, to recognize and respond to symptoms of bronchospasm, to maintain health and prevent complications, and to promote normal activities. The nurse should determine any cultural or ethnic beliefs or practices that influence self-management and that may necessitate modifications in educational approaches to meet the family's needs. Inconsistent home care, on the part of either the child or the parents, often leads to unnecessary ED visits for management ([Volpe, Smith, and Sultan, 2011](#)). Parents and older children often need education reinforced about the maintenance aspect of asthma management; children benefit from drug therapy even when asthma manifestations are not evident.

Avoid Allergens

One goal of asthma management is avoidance of an exacerbation. Parents need to know how to avoid allergens that precipitate asthma episodes. The nurse assists the parent in modifying the environment to reduce contact with the offending allergen(s). Parents are cautioned to avoid exposing a sensitive child to excessive cold, wind, and other extremes of weather; smoke (open fire or tobacco); sprays; scents; and other irritants. Foods known to