

FRESH AIR

Asthma Collaborative Newsletter • Spring 2016

Doctor's Corner

Welcome to the Asthma Collaborative's spring newsletter! We're excited to help you stay up to date on the latest news and events in our region.

Parent Asthma Classes

We have completed our Parent Asthma Classes for the 2015-2016 school year. Thank you to everyone who participated! We reached 81 families with seven classes. Our surveys indicate that many parents were unaware of the nature of asthma, potential triggers, or what to do when someone had an asthma attack. A number of parents described symptoms that may be an indication of undiagnosed asthma. Parents left our classes with a better understanding of triggers to avoid and how to manage an urgent situation when it arises.

Global Warming and Your Lungs

Global Warming is the gradual increase of our average temperature. Many things are impacted by Global Warming: our ability to store water, the likelihood of flood or sea level rise, and longer seasons. With longer periods of warm temperatures we see more pollen in the air, which is increasing the allergy season. Be proactive about reducing your exposure to allergens and talking to your doctor about appropriate allergy management – out of control allergies can trigger your asthma.

New! Grass Pollen Pill

A new development in allergy management is a pill patients can take to prevent grass allergies. Rather than swallow a pill, use a nasal spray, or get an allergy shot, this new tablet is dissolved under the patient's tongue every day at home. It is recommended that patients start this treatment three to four months before the grass season, so unfortunately it's too late to start if you live in the Sacramento Region. If you suffer from grass allergies, be sure to ask your doctor about this option as you prepare for next year's allergy season. (*con't. next page*)

Faces of Asthma



Todd, father of one

Todd Woods didn't know his son Jonathon had asthma until he awoke one night to find his son hardly breathing. The sound of his wheezing woke him and his wife up at 4am, prompting Todd to call 911. Todd's advice to other parents is to "Try not to panic the first time. I panicked the first time. Try to understand [what is happening] and take it slow." Todd has since learned that Jonathon can develop symptoms of asthma in the wintertime or when he gets sick. Thanks to the SETA Head Start class he took in November 2014, Todd now knows that he can start his son on albuterol as soon as Jonathon gets a runny nose. By working harder to prevent his son's symptoms, Todd hopes to avoid another call to 911.



That's it for this newsletter. Please do not hesitate to contact us at staff@sacbreathe.org if you have any questions about asthma, and connect with Breathe on Facebook or our e-newsletter to stay up to date on new information and events.

Breathe well!

Gordon Garcia, MD
Arif Seyal, MD
Co-Chairs, Asthma Collaborative



Spare the Air

Spare the Air is a campaign that runs from May 1st through October 31st each year, when ozone levels in our region are highest. Ozone, also known as smog, can trigger health problems including chest pain, coughing, throat irritation, and congestion.

Ozone is formed when air pollutants from vehicles and large equipment chemically react in the presence of sunlight. It is lower in the morning and higher in the afternoon and early evening. You can help improve the air quality in your community by driving less.

Air pollution can affect everyone, but people with asthma and other lung diseases are more vulnerable to air pollution's health effects. If you fall into this category, you are considered a "sensitive group," and should avoid outdoor activity when the air quality index is above 100.

Learn more about air quality and sign up for air quality index alerts at <http://www.sparetheair.com/>

Free Asthma Screenings!

Thanks to innovative partnerships with Raley's and the Mr. and Mrs. G. Kirk Swingle Foundation, Breathe will be offering 12 FREE Mobile Asthma Screenings in communities throughout the region! Watch Breathe's Facebook page (facebook.com/breathesac) or join our e-newsletter to stay updated on those events as they are scheduled.

Please contact Katie at kgarcia@sacbreathe.org or 916-444-5900 extension 215 if you'd like more information. Translation is available upon request.

What do I do if I have an attack?

- R** **EMAIN CALM**
Asthma worsens with panic. Slow your breathing with pursed lips. Breathe in through your nose, out through your mouth.
- E** **LIMINATE TRIGGERS**
Identify and remove triggers like smoke.
- S** **IT UPRIGHT**
Lying down is not recommended.
- T** **AKE MEDICATION**
Treat your attack soon with your rescue inhaler so your asthma doesn't get worse.