



How Much Do You Know About Asthma?

What is asthma?

- ✧ Asthma is inflammation and spasm of the airway that can result in a variety of symptoms including:
 - difficulty breathing.
 - lightheadedness.
 - coughing.

What can make asthma worse?

- ✧ Exposure to allergens and irritants such as dust mites, dust, smoke, pollen, pets, etc.
- ✧ Cold, dry air
- ✧ Exercise

What is allergen avoidance?

- ✧ Allergen avoidance is limiting exposure to allergens that could potentially worsen asthma symptoms.

How can I reduce dust mites?

- ✧ Dust mites are one of the most common allergens and can be lessened with numerous actions.
 - Remove any stuffed animals from the bedroom.
 - With a dehumidifier, maintain humidity between 20 and 40 percent indoors, especially in the bedroom where most people spend about eight hours each day.
 - Use allergen covers on mattress, box spring and pillows.
 - Wash bedding in hot water at least once a week.

How can I tell if I am using my rescue inhaler too much?

- ✧ If you are using a rescue medication such as albuterol (Ventolin[®], Proventil[®]), levalbuterol (Xopenex[®]) or pirbuterol (Maxair[®]) more than two days a week (not including pre-treatment for exercise), it may be time to discuss changing your therapy with your doctor.

What type of breath will get me the most benefit from my dry powder inhaler?

- ✧ Unlike metered dose inhalers that require a slow, even breath, dry powder inhalers require a quick, forceful breath to get the powder into the lungs.

What makes the HFA inhalers different from the older CFC inhalers?

- ✧ They contain a different propellant to help get the medication down into the lungs.

What makes HFA inhalers better than the older CFC inhalers?

- ✧ They are safer for the environment.
- ✧ They allow for more medicine to get down into the lungs. Instead of having a forceful mist hitting the back of the throat like with the older CFC propellants, the HFA inhalers produce a finer mist that is inhaled.

Will I notice a difference when I start using an HFA inhaler?

- ✧ You may notice that you do not feel the medication hitting the back of your throat. As long as you are using the inhaler correctly, you will still be getting medication into your lungs for the same effect.
- ✧ It is a good idea to review your inhaler technique periodically with your pharmacist to make sure you are using it correctly.

For more information, ask your pharmacist!

This information provided by the Michigan Pharmacists Association and:

