

BREATHING SPACE

Respiratory Disease Newsletter

Health Promotion & Chronic Disease Division
Chronic Disease & Environmental Epidemiology Section



Volume 2, Number 3

September 2004

Asthma and Influenza – the bottom line: GET VACCINATED!

The 2004-2005 Influenza Season is quickly approaching! It is time to start thinking about influenza vaccination.

Did you know that vaccinating every person with asthma could prevent about 136,000 hospitalizations each year during the influenza season? Persons with asthma are at high risk of developing complications after contracting influenza. This is not stomach flu, this is a severe respiratory infection that can result in complications of pneumonia or acute respiratory distress. In spite of this, the number of persons with asthma who get vaccinated each year is very small. Only 3 in 10 adults and 1 in 20 children actually get vaccinated. It's time to spread the word that influenza and its severe complications are preventable through vaccination!

Who to vaccinate?

- All persons with asthma, 6 months of age and older, should receive influenza vaccination every fall, but that's not all...
- All persons living with those with asthma should get vaccinated, too. This prevents the disease from coming into the household.
- Additionally, health care workers – those staffing clinics, ERs, long term care facilities, and those providing home health care services, whether you're the nurse, the doctor, the admitting clerk, or volunteering to work with persons who have history of asthma should get vaccinated. Persons providing health care services to at risk individuals have not done a very good job of getting the influenza vaccination. Just over one third of health care workers get vaccinated each fall. Accept the challenge of improving influenza vaccination rates of health care workers, it sets an example of the importance of vaccination; it protects the worker, the patients, and the families of health care workers.

If you have more questions about influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations go to MDH's new flu website – www.mdhflu.com. You can download Vaccine Information Statements, read the recommendations, learn about the myths and facts of influenza and influenza vaccination, and find a clinic to get your influenza vaccination.

Minnesota Asthma Coalition Regional Coordinators

Every regional asthma coalition in Minnesota now has a coordinator!

If you haven't joined your regional coalition, please contact one of the following:

Metro: Chris Krueger, kruegercomm@comcast.net, 651-340-6106

North West: Michelle Moncrieffe Foreman, nwrac@yahoo.com, 218-751-0755

North East: Maureen Strange, strangem@co.st-louis.mn.us, 218-725-5239

East Central: Geneve Vaughan, geneve.vaughan@co.kanabec.mn.us, 320-679-6330

West Central: Kristin Wilson, kristin.wilson@primewest.org, 320-762-2917

Central: Kathleen Milligan, milleganala@yahoo.com, 320-253-6011

South East: Judy Wothke, jwothke@hbc.com, 507-453-0714

South Central: Erin Simmons, scasthma@hickorytech.net, 507-381-8257

South West: Amy Roggenbuck, aroggen@farmerstel.net, 320-598-7313

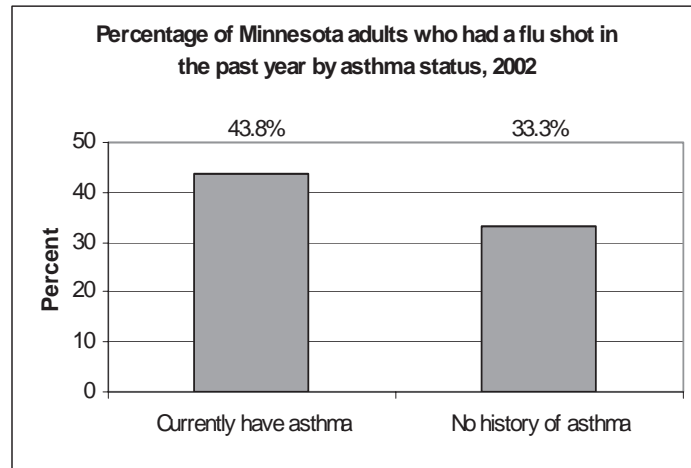
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Minnesota Adults and Flu Shots

Minnesota adults with asthma are more likely to report having had a flu shot in the past year than those without asthma. This finding is encouraging since people with asthma are more likely to become seriously ill with influenza. Nonetheless, there is clearly a need to increase the proportion of Minnesota adults with asthma who get yearly flu shots.



Source: Minnesota Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2002

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Managing Asthma in MN Schools More Trainings Added!

Two more trainings have been added to the schedule for the school asthma trainings. Trainings will be held in Mankato on October 5 and in the metro area on November 17. More details will follow on the exact location of these trainings. Other trainings are Rochester - September 23, Fergus Falls - September 29, Thief River Falls - October 12, Bemidji - October 13, Glencoe - October 26, Brainerd - October 29, and St. Cloud - November 10.

The complete training schedule and registration form can be downloaded from the MDH website at www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/cdee/asthma. Click on School Health or Minnesota Asthma Events.

For more information, contact Deb Hill at 612-676-5213 or deborah.hill@health.state.mn.us.

Check this out!

Adapting your practice: treatment and recommendations for homeless patients with asthma.

http://www.guideline.gov/summary/summary.aspx?doc_id=4850&nbr=3491&string=asthma

Public Health Prevention Specialist

We are pleased that the MDH Asthma Unit is one of 24 public health programs nationally to be matched with a Public Health Prevention Specialist (PHPS) from the CDC. Our PHPS is Subha Chandar, MPH. CDC is funding her to spend two years with the MDH asthma program helping to implement the state asthma plan. Subha spent her first PHPS year in the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry at CDC in Atlanta. We are delighted to have her!

Upcoming Events

SW Region Asthma Coalition Meeting

Thursday, September 9, 4:30-5:30 p.m.
Courthouse, 607 West Main Street
Marshall, MN
Amy Roggenbuck, 320-568-2471,
aaroggen@farmerstel.net

W Central Asthma Coalition Meeting

Thursday, September 23, 2004, 11 - 1:00
Douglas County Hospital, Alexandria
Education Room, West Lower level
Kristin Wilson, 320-762-2917,
kristin.wilson@primewest.org

PACE Training

September 24-25, 2004
Kelly Inn, Saint Cloud
Kathleen Milligan, 320-492-6202,
milliganala@yahoo.com

Coding Training

Thursday, September 30, 2004
ALAMN Board Room, St. Paul
April Kaeder, 651-268-7615,
april.kaeder@alamn.org

PACE Training

Saturday, October 2, 2004
ALAMN Board Room, St. Paul
April Kaeder, 651-268-7615,
april.kaeder@alamn.org

MDH Asthma Program Update

Wednesday, October 27, 8:00-10:00 a.m.
Snelling Office Park, St. Paul
Deb Hill, 612-676-5213,
deborah.hill@health.state.mn.us

Asthma Education Certificate Course

October 27-28, 2004
490 Concordia Avenue, St. Paul
Cathy Stahl, 651-268-7582,
cathy.stahl@alamn.org

PACE Training

Tuesday, November 2, 2004
ALAMN Board Room, St. Paul
April Kaeder, 651-268-7615,
april.kaeder@alamn.org

Implementation and Interpretation of Spirometry

Wednesday, November 3, 2004
ALAMN Board Room, St. Paul
April Kaeder, 651-268-7615,
april.kaeder@alamn.org

Local Smoking Ordinances in Minnesota

Secondhand smoke, also known as environmental tobacco smoke, is strongly linked to the development of asthma in young children and is an irritant that can trigger an asthma attack in both children and adults. Exposure to secondhand smoke accounts for up to 62,000 heart disease deaths every year in the U.S., and is responsible for about 3,000 lung cancer deaths each year in nonsmoking adults. The single most effective way to protect people from the dangers of secondhand smoke is to eliminate secondhand smoke from the environment.

The Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act (MCIAA) regulates smoking in public places and work places. The MCIAA prohibits smoking in health care facilities, K-12 public schools, and day cares during the hours of operation. In all other public places and work places, smoking may be allowed if the smoking-permitted areas comply with state law.

Cities and counties may adopt smoking ordinances that are more restrictive than the MCIAA. Since 2000, several communities have passed smoking ordinances. These include the cities of Bloomington, Cloquet, Duluth, Minneapolis, Moose Lake, and Olmsted County. Several other cities and counties are considering smoking ordinances. While all of these ordinances prohibit smoking in restaurants, some also prohibit smoking in bars, bowling alleys, pool halls, and work places.

The city of Bloomington has the most restrictive ordinance – it prohibits smoking in indoor public places and work places and also prohibits smoking within 25 feet of entrances, exits, open windows, and ventilation intakes of public places and work places. The Bloomington Advisory Board of Health prepared a report that includes a literature review of the health effects of secondhand smoke and the economic impacts of smoke-free regulations. Here's a link to the city of Bloomington web page that includes their ordinance and the Advisory Board of Health report <http://www.ci.bloomington.mn.us/cityhall/dept/commserv/publhealth/topics/smokefree/smokefree.htm>

The William Mitchell College of Law's Tobacco Law Center has developed sample ordinances for eliminating smoking in restaurants and for eliminating smoking in public places and places of work. The link to their web page is: http://www.wmitchell.edu/tobaccolaw/resources.html#Sample_Ordinances.

For additional information, contact Laura Oatman at 612-676-5049 or laura.oatman@health.state.mn.us.

EPA Grant Awarded

The MDH Asthma Unit has been awarded a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to pursue environmental interventions to reduce allergen exposure in pediatric asthma patients. Pediatric Home Service will work with MDH to implement interventions for such asthma triggers as secondhand smoke, house dust mites, cockroaches, mold, and animal dander. Funding will begin September 1, 2004.

For additional information on the EPA grant, contact Laura Oatman at 612-676-5049 or laura.oatman@health.state.mn.us.

Questions about lung health?

Call 1-800-548-8252
American Lung Association
Call Center

Asthma Program Update - October 27, 2004

The first meeting of the Commissioner’s Asthma Advisory Work Group was October 31, 2001. A lot has happened in three years! Come celebrate and discuss future plans at the update on Minnesota’s asthma program on Wednesday, October 27, 2004, 8 - 10 a.m. at Snelling Office Park, 1645 Energy Park Drive, St. Paul, MN. Watch your mail for more information or contact Deb Hill at 612-676-5213 or deborah.hill@health.state.mn.us. For detailed directions to Snelling Office Park go to: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/about/sop.html>

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For more information, or to request this material in another format contact: Deb Hill at 612-676-5213 or deborah.hill@health.state.mn.us
MN Relay Service TDD: 1-800-627-3528

Breathing Space is also available on the MDH Asthma website: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/cdee/asthma

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BREATHING SPACE, a quarterly respiratory disease newsletter, is produced by the Minnesota Department of Health Asthma Program. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide health professionals, school nurses, and community members with current research, information, and resources on respiratory disease.

This newsletter is also distributed electronically. To receive an electronic version, contact: jennifer.walker@health.state.mn.us. For more information, go to the MDH asthma website at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/cdee/asthma.

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