

Asthma Triggers In Your Home



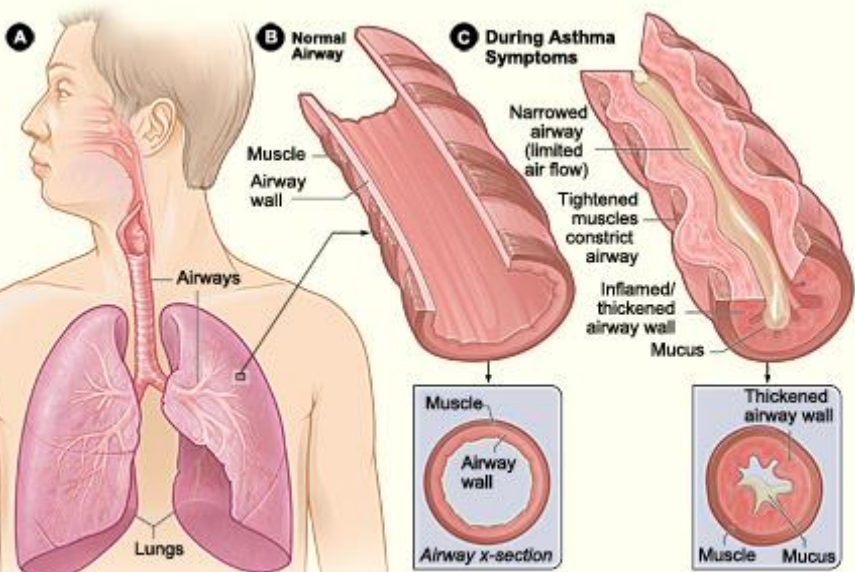
A community workshop to promote good health.



Today's discussion will include:

- Overview of asthma symptoms
- Overview of in-home asthma triggers and how to remove them
- *Discussion*: we will break out into 3 groups based on language
- *Report back*: review the questions and conversations that occurred in small groups

Asthma is a chronic condition that causes a person's airways to become inflamed, to become narrow and produce extra mucus.



Symptoms of asthma include:

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Shortness of breath
- Chest tightness



There are treatments available to manage asthma symptoms. Only your doctor can determine if you have asthma, and what treatments are appropriate.



If you think that you or someone in your family may have asthma, go to your primary care physician for a screening.

For people with asthma, exposure to certain things can trigger asthma symptoms, which is also known as an *asthma attack*. Many triggers are commonly found in homes.

Asthma triggers include:

- Smoke
- Perfume
- Incense burning
- Mold
- Dust mites
- Cockroaches
- Pet dander
- Fuel burning appliances
- Others



Keeping Your Home Trigger Free:

Smoke

- Do not allow people to smoke in your home. Have people smoke outside.
- Do not allow smoking in the car.
- Do not burn incense in your home.



Mold

Molds grow on moist surfaces. To get rid of excess moisture in your home:

- Turn fan on when showering
- Clean up standing water
- Use a dehumidifier
- Allow for air circulation
- Replace wood, wallboard etc. that has moisture damage



Dust Mites

Dust mites are tiny insects that eat dead skin. They are so small you can't see them, but their feces can trigger asthma.

- Wash bedding in hot water often
- Use allergen-proof pillow and mattress covers
- Dust surfaces throughout home
- Remove area rugs, curtains and fabric furniture – they collect dust



Cockroaches

Cockroach dust is a very strong asthma trigger. To get rid of cockroaches:

- Remove sources of water
- Tightly seal food in cupboards
- Clean food crumbs from tables, counters and floors daily
- Kill cockroaches using bait (NOT bug bombs)
- Pick up clutter where roaches live



Pet Dander

Dander is dead skin cells from animals.

Cat dander typically triggers asthma more than dog dander. To get rid of dander:

- Get rid of pet, if possible
- Do not allow pet in bedroom
- Bathe pet often
- Vacuum and clean pet sleeping and play areas often
- Wash hands and clothes after handling pet



Fuel Burning Appliances

These include stoves, furnaces, space heaters etc. that burn fuel (wood, natural gas, kerosene). Fuel burning appliances can produce gases, smoke or soot that trigger asthma as well as toxic carbon monoxide (CO).

- Use CO detectors
- Use an exhaust fan in kitchen
- Do not use stove to heat home
- Only use non-electric space heaters that are vented outside
- Have heating system checked and chimney cleaned every year



Who to call if you have pests in your home?

1. Your Landlord
2. Code Enforcement
Lewiston: 513-3125
Auburn: 333-6600
3. Pine Tree Legal Assistance: 784-1558

Discussion

Let's now take 20 minutes for questions
and additional conversations

Topics to consider: asthma triggers in your
home, next steps for removal

Closing

What were the questions, themes, topics discussed?

For more information about asthma triggers in your home, contact Healthy Androscoggin at 207-795-5990 or email info@healthyandroscoggin.com

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