



ASTHMA

Asthma is inflammation of the airways causing respiratory symptoms: cough, wheezing, trouble breathing, chest pain or tightness. It is the most common chronic illness in children and is the most common reason for missed school days!

Risk Factors for Developing Asthma:

- Parental history of asthma
- Early viral respiratory infection
- Prematurity
- Passive exposure to smoke
- RSV infection

Common Asthma Triggers:

- Viral respiratory infection
- Exercise or Allergies
- Changes in weather
- VOG from volcanic activity

Risk Factors for Fatal Asthma:

- Hospitalization or ED visit for asthma
- Not using asthma medication correctly
- Poor access to health care
- Exposure to tobacco smoke

Asthma Attack:

- Inflammation in airways
- Destruction of the cells that line the airways
- Extra mucous produced in the airways
- Bronchospasm (tightening of the muscles that surround the airways)

Tools for Managing Asthma:

- Rescue (quick relief) Medications:
 - Beta-agonist (Bronchodilators): temporarily open and relaxes lower airways
 - Examples: Albuterol, Xopenex (levalbuterol)
 - Oral steroids (not as rapid acting) are probably the most important medication that can stop an asthma attack from progressing.
- Controller Medications: Inhaled steroids can be used daily to decrease severity and frequency of asthma attacks.
 - Examples: Pulmicort (budesonide), Flovent (fluticasone)
- Learn YOUR Asthma Triggers: Some can be prevented, some may need pretreatment.
- Asthma Action Plan: Review and update plan with your pediatrician every 4-6 months.
- Work as a Team: Asthma is best controlled when the patient, parent, and pediatrician are on the same page and work together.

Team Goals:

- Prevention of asthma symptoms while maintaining a good quality of life
- Infrequent use of rescue medication (albuterol)
- Maintenance of near normal lung function
- Maintenance of normal physical activity level
- Prevention of progressive loss of lung function
- ZERO hospital and emergency department visits for asthma

*** Patient handouts created by Kapa'a Pediatrics are intended to give parents the most common and pertinent facts about a certain issue. If there is ever any concern that your child was given an incorrect diagnosis or is not following the usual expected course for an illness please call us to speak with a physician. (808) 634-8011***