

The Mortar & Pestle

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Stafford Pharmacy and Home Healthcare



ASTHMA AWARENESS¹

World Asthma Day this year is May 6th, 2014. The event is organized by the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) to improve asthma awareness and care around the world. This year to join in the initiative we will focus our newsletter with information about this chronic disease.

What causes asthma?

The causes of asthma are not well understood, and the rapid increase in asthma prevalence around the world is one of the biggest mysteries in modern medicine. In the 1990s, scientists thought that diesel exhaust and other pollutants might be causing the asthma epidemic. However, they now believe that the picture is more complex. Many scientists are examining the role of genetic factors in causing asthma, and researchers are also looking at how the immune system develops in early life.

What is known about Asthma?

Unfortunately...asthma is one of the most common chronic diseases, with an estimated 300 million individuals affected worldwide. Its prevalence is **increasing, especially among children.**

Fortunately... asthma can be effectively treated and most patients can achieve good control of their disease. When asthma is under control patients can:

- Avoid troublesome symptoms night and day
- Use little or no reliever medication
- Have productive, physically active lives
- Have (near) normal lung function
- Avoid serious attacks

Asthma causes recurring episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and coughing, particularly at night or in the early morning.

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disorder of the airways. Chronically inflamed airways are hyperresponsive; they become obstructed and airflow is limited (by closing of the airways, mucus plugs, and increased inflammation) when airways are exposed to various risk factors.

Common risk factors for asthma symptoms include exposure to allergens (such as those from house dust mites, animals with fur, cockroaches, pollens, and molds), occupational irritants, tobacco smoke, respiratory (viral) infections, exercise, strong emotional expressions, chemical irritants, and drugs (such as aspirin and beta blockers).

If you are concerned about your asthma symptoms, speak with one of our pharmacists today!

¹ Information adapted from www.ginasthma.org

THE THIRTY SECOND ASTHMA TEST

Use this simple 5 question test to determine if you asthma is controlled!

Answer the following questions with either a 'yes' or a 'no':

- 1) Do you cough, wheeze, or have a tight chest because of your asthma? (4 or more days a week) **YES / NO**
- 2) Do coughing, wheezing, or chest tightness wake you at night?(1 or more times a week) **YES / NO**
- 3) Do you stop exercising because of your asthma? (in the past 3 months) **YES / NO**
- 4) Do you ever miss work or school because of your asthma?(in the past 3 months) **YES / NO**
- 5) Do you use your blue inhaler 2 or more times a week? (except one dose/day for exercise) **YES / NO**

If you answer 'Yes' to **one or more questions**, see your pharmacist or doctor and ask how you can feel better today.

PROPER INHALER TECHNIQUE



There are now multiple different styles of asthma inhalers on the market, and each requires a different inhalation technique for proper use. Having one or more styles of inhalers can make using each one much trickier.

How do you use your inhaler? Did you know that proper inhaler technique is essential for your asthma control? **It is a known fact that patients with good inhaler techniques have much better control over their asthma.**

If you answered YES to any of the questions on the 30 second asthma test, you may not be using your inhaler correctly. If this is the case we invite you to bring your inhalers into the pharmacy to go over technique and discuss your asthma control. In fact, if you have asthma you may be eligible to receive one-on-one consultations with one of our pharmacists, a benefit with your Alberta Health Care Card. **To set up an appointment to discuss your asthma control, speak with a member of our pharmacy team in person, or phone (403) 320-6500 ext 1 today!**



Our pharmacists are here to help you to ensure you have the best asthma control. Speak with one of our pharmacists today if you would like to learn how to better control your asthma.

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