



ALERT

Find out more... visit www.GetAsthmaHelp.org

CLINICAL TRIALS Kathleen Slonager, RN, AE-C, DiHOM, ADS

If you or someone you know has asthma, there are certain steps that you can take to help keep your asthma in control. Using your asthma medicines correctly and talking with your doctor, nurse, or certified asthma educator will help you lead a normal and healthy life. If you are interested in learning about and trying new asthma treatments and helping others who also have asthma, then you might think about signing up for a clinical trial.

Clinical trials are research studies. These studies may be used to answer questions about new ways of treating or preventing asthma attacks. Clinical trials may also be used to answer other questions about caring for people with asthma.

Clinical trials are run by doctors, nurses and other health professionals. To be in an asthma clinical trial, you must have asthma or be at risk for it, you must be able to take the treatment that is being studied - if treatment is part of the study, and you must be able to follow the study rules. Before you enter the study, the doctors and nurses will make sure that you can take part. They may ask you questions about your health, give you a physical exam, or perform other medical tests.

There are laws that protect the rights of people in clinical trials. One of these laws requires study doctors and nurses to enroll patients only after they have given informed consent. This means that the study doctors and nurses must tell you everything that may affect whether or not you would want to be in the trial. Also, before you enter the trial, they must have your agreement in writing that you have been given this information and that you are willing to take part in the study.

While there are numerous benefits to participating in a clinical study, there are also some risks. There may be unpleasant or serious side effects to experimental treatment. The treatment may not be effective for the volunteer or the study may require a lot of time and effort to participate. If you decide that you no longer want to take a study treatment or take part in other study activities, you can stop at any time. Just be sure that your doctor knows about your decision. If a study treatment is not working for you or if it causes harmful side effects, your doctor will stop your treatment. If you get sick from taking a study drug, the people running the trial will make sure that you are able to get treatment if you need it.



Talk with your doctor or health care provider if you are thinking about signing up for a clinical trial. He or she will be able to answer any questions that you might have regarding the trial, such as what are the side effects of the study drug and who to call if there is a problem.

Please visit www.clinicaltrials.gov or www.nhlbi.nih.gov/studies for more information regarding clinical trials.



Kathleen Slonager is a Registered Nurse and a Certified Asthma Educator. She is currently the Executive Director of Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America - Michigan Chapter (www.aafamich.org)

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-  In the U.S., 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu¹
-  Nationally, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications every year¹
-  If all people with asthma in the U.S. received a flu shot, close to 136,000 hospitalizations could be prevented each year²

Sources:

1. DHHS, Key Facts about Influenza and the Influenza Vaccine, 2006

2. American Lung Association, Influenza Factsheet, 2006

ASTHMA COALITION COLUMN



Summit Update: The Healthy School Action Tool

The Healthy School Action Tool (HSAT) was the focus of this September's Summit of Michigan Asthma Coalitions. This past year, the Asthma Initiative of Michigan (AIM) has been working hard in the schools to get the word out - Asthma is more serious than you think. AIM's next step will be to address and promote asthma-friendly policies in schools. HSAT can help with those next steps.

The HSAT is a tool to help schools assess whether their school environment offers regular messages about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The HSAT Action Plan guides schools to set priorities for action, and determine a timeline to adapt and/or develop health policies.

"The HSAT does represent a change for our schools, and schools across the U.S. are making these positive changes," said, Shawn Cannarile, the Asthma in Schools Coordinator from the Michigan Public Health Institute. "Small targeted changes are the key to success and by affecting school policy and environment, we can reach a larger number of students and teachers in a cost effective way."

Over the next year, the HSAT design will be restructured to adapt other health topics including asthma. A draft of the HSAT asthma questions will be piloted by the end of the year. Overall changes to the HSAT website, including addition of the asthma questions, will be made during the summer of 2007, in time for a back to school launch in the fall.



Please direct questions and comments about this newsletter to:

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FALL ASTHMA TIP: How to Prepare for Flu Season

Fever, Coughing, Chills, Oh My! The flu is not fun at all. Anyone can get the flu and many adults and children feel better in a week. But if you have asthma, there is a higher chance that you can get sick and even die from the flu and its related problems.

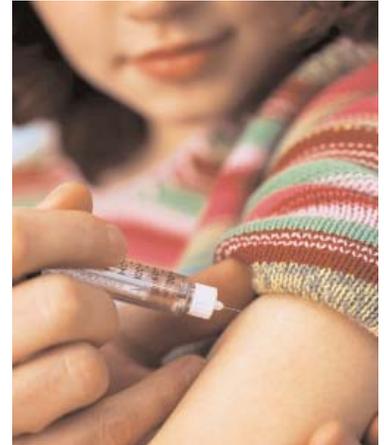
There are ways to protect yourself and your family from the flu this year.

- 1) Wash your hands often.
- 2) Try not to touch your eyes, mouth, and nose. It's the easiest way for germs on your hands to get into your body.
- 3) Avoid contact with those who are sick.
- 4) Get a flu shot. According to a new study from the University of Michigan, many patients missed a chance to get vaccinated. If you are already planning to go to the doctor over the next few months, ask for a flu shot.

If you have asthma, you should not get the new nasal spray vaccine. It has not been proven safe for people with asthma or other lung diseases. Stick with the flu shot.

October or November is the best time to be vaccinated because most people get the flu in the winter, but you can still get vaccinated in December and later.

Visit <http://www.flucliniclocator.org/> to find a flu clinic near you.



ADVOCACY UPDATE : Grand Rapids is Now Smokefree!

October 17th, 2006, the Grand Rapids City Commission voted to pass a smokefree worksites and public places ordinance. As a result, close to 200,000 additional Michigan residents will now be protected from the dangers of secondhand smoke in the work place and in public places.

Visit www.makeMlairsSmokefree.com to see what other Michigan cities and counties have gone smokefree and what you can do to help.

MI ASTHMA CALENDAR

October

- 6 - Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America -Michigan Chapter Fundraiser Auction
- 27 For more info: 888-444-0333 or visit: www.aafamich.cmarket.com
- 24 Asthma Information Review Course
Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth, 7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m., \$85 for practitioners and \$45 for students, for more info: 734-677-6772
- 25, 26 Eighth Annual ACCP Community Asthma and COPD Coalitions Symposium
Salt Lake City, Utah, for more info: (847) 498-8366 or visit their website, <http://www.chestnet.org/CHEST/program/index.php>

November

- 9 Asthma Education and Awareness Presentation
Lakeland Center for Outpatient Services, St. Joseph, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., for more info: 269-927-5148
- 13 Asthma Trigger Training for Local Health Professionals
Kent Intermediate School District, Grand Rapids, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., free but must pre-register, for more info: 312-353-5614

December

- 29 16th Annual "Living with Asthma" Poster Contest
Poster contest for children in grades 1 through 8 who have asthma. For more info visit: <http://www.aaaai.org/patients/just4kids/postercontest/2006/>

Visit www.GetAsthmaHelp.org or call 866-395-8647 for more information about asthma events & trainings in your area.