KEY EDUCATIONAL MESSAGES:
“Teach and reinforce at every opportunity”
(EPR-3 Summary Report page 18)

Basic Facts About Asthma
• The contrast between airways of a person who has and a person who does not have asthma; the role of inflammation.
• What happens to the airways during an asthma episode?

Role of Medications- Understanding the Difference Between:
• Long-term control medications: prevent symptoms, often by reducing inflammation. Must be taken daily. Do not expect them to give quick relief.
• Quick-relief medications: SABAs relax airway muscles to provide prompt relief of symptoms. Do not expect them to provide long-term asthma control. Using SABA >2 days/week indicates the need for starting or increasing long-term control medications.

Patient Skills
• Taking medications correctly
  o Inhaler technique (demonstrate to the patient and have the patient return the demonstration).
  o Use of devices, as prescribed (e.g., valved-holding chamber (VHC) or spacer; nebulizer; MDI vs DPI).
• Identifying and avoiding environmental exposures that worsen the patient’s asthma; e.g., allergens, irritants, tobacco smoke.
• Self-monitoring
  o Assess level of asthma control.
  o Monitor symptoms and, if prescribed, PEF measures.
  o Recognize early signs and symptoms of worsening asthma.
• Using a written asthma action plan to know when and how to:
  o Take daily actions to control asthma.
  o Adjust medication in response to signs of worsening asthma.
  o Seeking medical care as appropriate.