

Asthma Insider

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CLINIC CORNER

The eAsthma Tracker Has a Positive Impact

I have greatly appreciated the positive impact of eAsthma Tracker on optimizing asthma control in my patients.

First and foremost, it provides a convenient means through which patients and parents can actively participate in tracking asthma compliance and control.

Secondly, armed with information from the eAsthma Tracker, we have been able to partner with families to provide more timely intervention, and to evaluate and alter treatment plans and/or patient compliance before asthma exacerbations occur.

In addition, the incentives provided to patients for using the system have helped motivate multiple patients who were previously ambivalent about managing their asthma to adhere more closely to their treatment plan.

The combination of these factors has led to improved provider-patient communication and better asthma control.

An 11-year-old female patient of mine could serve as one example of eAsthma Tracker's contribution. Prior to coming to my practice, this patient thought she merely suffered from intermittent exercise-induced asthma. She also suffered from frequent severe headaches that often caused

her to miss school. As part of routine asthma care, spirometry was performed, and revealed moderate airway obstruction. The patient was prescribed a twice-daily inhaled steroid, but often resisted using it.



Jeffrey L. Jensen, MD, FAAP

However, after enrolling in eAsthma Tracker, her compliance became excellent and her lung function improved accordingly. Interestingly, her headaches improved almost completely as well.

Another patient had struggled with compliance for years despite severe intermittent exacerbations that had led to multiple hospital admissions.

Since enrolling in eAsthma Tracker, this patient's compliance has improved dramatically and her spirometry results reached normal for the first time ever.

Not all participating patients have experienced such dramatic changes, but almost all of the patients and parents with whom I have spoken about eAsthma Tracker have expressed appreciation for the program, and those who have used it most consistently have generally achieved the most favorable results.

I feel that eAsthma Tracker has become one of my most important tools with which to assist my asthma patients and their families in learning to effectively manage their condition.

Sincerely and gratefully,

Jeff Jensen, MD FAAP

Interested in more testimonials?

Dr. Johnson (Pediatrician)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U9cO1f8ZWVg>

Dr. Fassel (Pediatrician)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=szEB1nk1-UM>

Michelle Frazier (Parent)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cO29BRDV4bA>

Amy Teleford (Parent)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dsw4vP-EL-I>

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Summer Fun and Allergic Asthma

Twenty-five million people in the United States suffer from asthma and 60 percent of those suffer from allergy induced asthma, better known as allergic asthma.

Allergens are identified as a harmful entity by the body, causing the immune system to release IgE (Immunoglobulin E). It actually binds to the allergen, which then releases chemicals that lead to swelling in and

around the lungs, causing an allergic asthma attack.

It's said that people with allergic asthma have higher than normal levels of IgE just by how their immune system reacts to allergy triggers. And unlike the common cold, allergies are not something you contract; they are usually genetically handed down or developed with repeated exposure to an antigen.

Asthma, however, can be a dormant

chronic disease—some people may outgrow it, some (when symptoms are mild) may choose to ignore it, and still others may see symptoms increase as they age. Unfortunately, allergic asthma is at its peak during the times we would rather be outside. That's because summer and spring are when the most pollen resides in the air.

What's more, pollen levels have been on the rise, drastically affecting the one out of every six Americans who suffer from outdoor allergies. But you don't need to lock yourselves inside for the season because, like asthma, this condition can be controlled.

Allergy triggers live in the same neighborhood as asthma triggers, and knowing this means you can treat the symptoms and limit exposure to triggers for each of the diseases.

So don't cancel your summer plans—there are things that can be done to enjoy the season and have fun in the sun:

- Take your rescue inhaler 30 minutes before exposing yourself to triggers. This will help contain flare-ups.
- Continue taking any maintenance medications your doctor has prescribed (e.g., Singulair).
- Talk to your doctor about over-the-counter or prescription allergy medication, or allergy shots.

There is no cure, but the next-best thing is control. Knowledge is power. Learn your triggers, track your symptoms with the eAsthma Tracker, and avoid exposure to know allergy triggers to stay healthy and have a fun-filled summer.

DON'T GIVE UP ON YOUR SUMMER—

There are things that can be done to enjoy the season and have fun in the sun:

- Take your rescue inhaler 30 minutes before exposing yourself to triggers.
- Continue taking any maintenance medications your doctor has prescribed.
- Talk to your doctor about allergy medication, or even allergy shots.

Although asthma and allergies share similar symptoms, they are very different—and it's the triggers that set them apart. Someone could suffer from common allergies such as watery eyes or hay fever and have asthma-like symptoms without being diagnosed with asthma. But someone with allergic asthma can be triggered by things that affect allergies such as pet dander, dust mites, and cockroaches.

By Stacey Riding

Question 1:

Why is it hard to breathe during an asthma attack?

- A. Because the muscles around your airways tighten
- B. Because your airways become inflamed and swollen
- C. Because your mucus production thickens
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

Answer: D. An asthma attack is a combination of all these. While mild asthma attacks (lasting a few minutes to a few hours) are more common, severe attacks can last long periods of time and often require medical attention. It is important to recognize your asthma symptoms and seek help when needed.

Question 2:

Which of the following are asthma triggers?

- A. Thunderstorms
- B. Strong emotions
- C. Tobacco smoke
- D. All of the above are triggers
- E. None of the above are triggers

Answer: D. Though unusual, all of the above can trigger an asthma attack. The list of triggers is long—keep in mind that triggers will vary from one asthma sufferer to another.

Question 3:

True or False: You don't have to have allergies to have asthma.

Answer: True. According to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, only half of the Americans with asthma also have allergies.

Question 4:

A quick-relief inhaler should be used:

- A. as a method to prevent asthma attacks.
- B. along with daily medications to help control flare-ups.

Answer: B. Quick-relief inhalers work immediately to relieve asthma symptoms, while long-term control medications work over time to prevent asthma attacks. Asthma control works best when quick-relief inhalers are used in conjunction with controller medications. Talk to your doctor about how often and under what circumstances these medications should be used.

Question 5:

True or False: People with asthma should avoid exercise.

Answer: False. Though you should talk to your doctor before starting any exercise regime, don't assume that with asthma exercise is off the table.

You and your doctor may also want to discuss using an inhaler before exercise to minimize asthma symptoms during exercise.

Question 6:

True or False: You don't have asthma if you don't wheeze.

Answer: False. You do not have to be wheezing to be suffering from asthma. Sometimes the only symptom is a persistent cough. Other symptoms include rapid breathing, chest tightening or pressure, and shortness of breath.

By Lis Malmgren

References

1. <http://www.webmd.com/asthma/guide/asthma-attack>
2. <http://www.everydayhealth.com/asthma-pictures/things-that-can-trigger-asthma-attacks.aspx>
3. https://secure02.kidshealth.org/parent/medical/asthma/rescue_controller.html

What's Your Asthma IQ?

PULMONARY FUNCTION TESTING

What is it and who needs it?

When you breathe in, your lungs take in oxygen and pass it to your blood. Carbon dioxide is moved out of your blood when you exhale. Those with asthma or other lung diseases may take in too much air, or their lungs may take too long to empty. Some lung diseases make it hard to get enough oxygen in the blood.

Your doctor may order a pulmonary function test to see how well your lungs work. This test, also known as spirometry, measures how well your lungs take in air and release it. It can help your doctor know if you have asthma, if the treatment for your asthma is working, or if there may be other causes for your shortness of breath.


So how does it work?
Pulmonary function testing is the most commonly performed lung function test, and it typically takes just a few minutes. You will breathe into a mouthpiece attached to a machine (the spirometer). This machine records how much air you breathe in and out over a period of time. You will likely be asked to breathe in as deeply as possible, and then exhale as fast and hard as you can. It is important to cooperate and follow the tester's instructions carefully.

Results are based on age, height, ethnicity, and gender. Your doctor will interpret your results and discuss them with you.

By Jordan Gaddis

References

1. National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health. "Pulmonary Function Tests." Medline Plus. 30 Mar. 2015. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003853.htm>
2. "Lung Function Tests." WebMD. 30 Mar. 2015. <http://www.webmd.com/lung/lung-function-tests>



Empowering kids with asthma

Camp Wyatt
Utah's only summer camp for children with asthma
July 13-17, 2015
Utah Elks' Camp Wapiti,
Tooele, UT

Learn more online:
<http://www.campwyatt.com>

eAT Facebook Group

I just checked my Farmville account, my tomatoes are getting red.
My inner car is a CRV, at least that's what the app said.
I posted a video of my kids playing, I got a ton of likes for that.
My baby dragon found its way home, and I have seventy dollars left in blackjack.
Some are doing better in those areas, but none of that matters to me.
There's only one page I 'like' to follow, and that's where I need to be.
I live with two asthmatics; I didn't know it could be so severe.
It's not so bad with eAsthma Tracker, 'cause I can share stories with my peers.
We share opinions and advice, and it seems we're all in sync.
It's easy to join and be welcomed in, by simply following the link.
This is a group where you really matter, it doesn't make much sense
That I'm stressing about corn in Farmville, when here I can make a difference.
I've learned so much in this group, from all the tips, stories, and advice.
Sharing opinions with others who suffer—it's really kind of nice.
I knew I wasn't alone, because asthma is nothing new.
But the people in the eAsthma Tracker User Group can relate to what I go through.
The Facebook page is up and running, and joining the family is free.
The knowledge and friends you make is worth more than any amount of money.
So follow the link you see, or type eAsthma Tracker User Group in the search bar.
Like the page and join the group, let's make this page go far.
So if you or someone you love has asthma then take the dive.
Because the advice you feel is irrelevant may actually save some lives.
I have a thousand Facebook friends, but I only talk to a few.
Hopefully in the near future, I can swap stories with you.
So again, just follow the link, let's take the time to care.
Cause having you join the group, is like a breath of fresh air!

by Stacey Riding

eAsthma Tracker User Group link:
<https://www.facebook.com/easthmatracker?ref=bookmarks>