

# Children's Health Update

## Are You Prepared to Manage Your Child's Asthma?

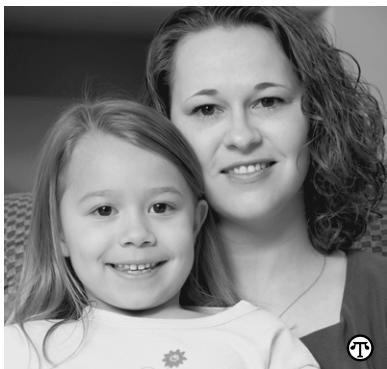
(NAPSA)—Cold and flu season can be tough for kids with asthma—and equally challenging for their parents. These common respiratory infections can make asthma worse, especially when parents are not taking steps necessary to keep their child's asthma well controlled.

A recent survey of parents with asthmatic children, conducted by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), revealed that many parents think their child's asthma is under control, even though the child has symptoms that prove otherwise. These signs of uncontrolled asthma include missed school days, hospitalization or emergency room visits, use of rescue medication more than twice a week and waking up at night more than once a week because of breathing problems or asthma symptoms.

The right medication is vital to ensure that a child's asthma stays well controlled throughout the year. One way to help manage everyday asthma symptoms is the use of a daily maintenance medication that can help control inflammation and may also prevent asthma attacks.

The survey also found that nearly 25 percent of parents haven't spoken to their child's doctor about how to better control asthma during this critical time of the year. Experts suggest parents talk to their child's doctor because having asthma can make it more difficult to fight a respiratory infection, such as a cold or the flu.

"Flu symptoms make asthma symptoms even worse," says Mike Tringale, director of external affairs for AAFA. "Patients with asthma who get the flu could end



**Children with asthma are at greater risk for illness during cold and flu season.**

up in the emergency room. Many parents find this out the hard way when their child gets sick."

Tringale recommends that parents take several steps to ensure their child is ready to take on cold and flu season:

- Get a flu shot. AAFA's Flu Shot Finder, available at [www.aafa.org](http://www.aafa.org), is a simple online zip-code search tool that links to a database of more than 25,000 flu clinic locations nationwide. The Flu Shot Finder returns a list of clinics, dates, times, addresses and phone numbers to help consumers contact the most convenient location and schedule a visit.

- Find the best asthma treatment. Work with the child's doctor to identify the best treatment plan to ensure asthma is under control.

- Encourage hand washing. One of the basic preventive measures for avoiding germs is consistent hand washing.

For more information about how to manage asthma during cold and flu season, visit [www.everydaykidz.com](http://www.everydaykidz.com) or [www.aafa.org](http://www.aafa.org).