



HEALTH AWARENESS

Breathing Easier: Messages For Asthma Relief

(NAPSA)—More than 17 million people in the U.S. have asthma — more people than live in the state of Florida.

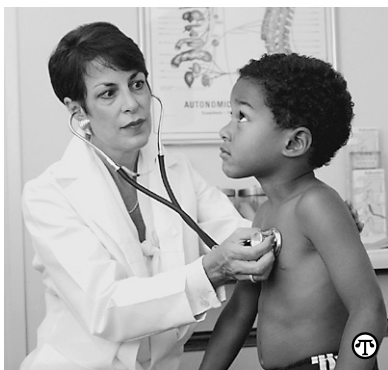
Asthma is also the most common chronic disease among children, affecting five million in the U.S. alone. It is the leading cause of school absences due to a chronic disease among children ages 5 to 17, causing more than 10 million absences each year. Asthma also accounts for more hospitalizations than any other childhood disease. Children with asthma spend an estimated 7.3 million days per year restricted to bed.

Some asthma symptoms include exercise-induced coughing, frequent shortness of breath, wheezing sounds when breathing, or tightness in the chest.

According to the Chronic Disease Directors (CDD), a Washington, D.C.-based public health association, it is important for people to see a doctor if they have any asthma symptoms.

Asthma can be life-threatening if not properly managed, but it can be controlled by avoiding triggers that cause attacks and by using fast-acting inhalers and other medications to treat acute attacks and maintain long-term control. It is important for people with asthma to use their inhalers and other medications exactly as prescribed.

Asthma triggers, such as cigarette smoke, dust mites, molds, some gases and other airborne particles, are everywhere—indoors and out-



Avoiding triggers and properly using medications can help those with asthma lead an active life.

doors. It is important for those with asthma to learn what specific triggers may cause an attack for them.

Avoiding asthma triggers, learning to recognize the symptoms of an asthma attack, and using appropriate treatments can allow those with asthma to enjoy an active lifestyle, prevent emergency room visits and reduce the number of school absences.

Free asthma screenings are offered; to find a free screening, contact the chronic disease unit of the state health department.

CDD is composed of the chief public health executive of each U.S. state and territory. CDD works to educate the public about risks and choices and strives to create access to preventative health services. To learn more about asthma, visit www.ChronicDisease.org.