



PRESENTED BY:



Lesson 4 – Lung Health

Asthma

Asthma is a lung disease that is chronic, lifelong and incurable. Someone with asthma may have swollen or inflamed airways inside of their lungs. The inflammation of these airways can make breathing extremely difficult and breathing can become more difficult under certain conditions. Conditions that can cause an asthma attack are also known as triggers. The following triggers are known to cause an asthma attack:

- Cold weather
- Dust
- Smoke
- Pollutants
- Chemicals
- Pet Dander

When someone with asthma is exposed to a trigger, the insides of the airways may produce extra mucus and become even more inflamed constricting the airways inside of the lungs and making it difficult for air to pass through. Triggers can also cause the muscles around the airways to contract, also making it difficult for air to pass through. When someone with asthma experiences either of these symptoms it can cause an asthma attack. Asthma can be extremely dangerous as it directly impairs the body's ability to get oxygen to vital organs – that is why it is so important to learn about the dangers of asthma. If you suffer from asthma it is important to understand what triggers cause your asthma attacks. If someone you know has asthma, it can be helpful to know their triggers as well so you can help them avoid potentially dangerous situations.

Try This:

The Asthma Straw Challenge – To understand what it feels like to have an asthma attack students will be given a narrow straw and asked to place the straw in their mouth and plug their nose. For a period of 20 seconds ask each student to breath only through the straw. After 20 seconds conduct a classroom discussion and ask students to share how it felt to experience restricted breathing, compare breathing through the straw to the passage of air in a restricted airway. **PLEASE NOTE:** It is imperative that teachers be aware of any existing health issues, including students suffering from asthma. Any students who suffer from asthma SHOULD NOT participate in this activity.

Is your school interested in free asthma education? Call the American Lung Association at 405-748-4674 to learn more about the free Open Airways program for schools.

You can find more information at

www.LUNGFORCE.org



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