

Breathe IN Breathe OUT



Asthma In Indiana

Fall/Winter 2009

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Special Topic

H1N1 and Asthma: What you need to know in order to keep people with asthma safe.

What is H1N1?

2009 H1N1 (formerly referred to as “swine flu”) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This virus is spreading from person-to-person worldwide, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread.

Statistics of H1N1:

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports 268 patients were hospitalized with 2009 H1N1 flu in early spring 2009 during the outbreak. The analysis found that while asthma occurs in 8% of the U.S. population, around 32% of those hospitalized with 2009 H1N1 flu had asthma. In Indiana 15.2% of the diagnosed H1N1 cases reported also had asthma.

Symptoms of H1N1:

The symptoms of 2009 H1N1 flu virus in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people who have been infected with 2009 H1N1 flu virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting.

How can you advise people with asthma to try to prevent catching the seasonal flu or H1N1?

The flu can spread easily. People with the flu spread infected droplets when they cough or sneeze. Anyone can get the flu if they inhale these droplets in the air or touch these droplets then touch their nose or mouth before washing their hands. In order to reduce their chances of catching the H1N1 virus, people are advised to wash their hands often and get the seasonal flu shot, along with the 2009 H1N1 flu shot. It is extremely important for people with asthma to follow their doctor’s orders and their asthma action plan and take all their medications as prescribed.

When should people with asthma go see their doctor?

Most people will recover without needing medical care. People with severe illness or those at high risk for flu complications (like people with asthma), should contact their health care provider or seek medical care at the first signs of the flu. The health care provider will determine whether flu testing or treatment is needed. Antiviral drugs can be given to make the illness milder and they may also prevent serious influenza complications. Antiviral drugs work best if started as soon as symptoms start. These antiviral drugs are prescription medicines with activity against influenza viruses, including 2009 H1N1 flu virus.

What to do if a person with asthma gets symptoms of H1N1?

People with H1N1 may be ill for a week or longer. They should stay home and keep away from others as much as possible. This includes avoiding travel and not going to work or school, for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Their fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.) If they leave the house to seek medical care, please advise them to wear a facemask, if available and tolerable, and cover their coughs and sneezes with a tissue.

In general, they should avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading their illness, especially people at increased risk of severe illness from influenza. With seasonal flu, people may be contagious from one day before they develop symptoms to up to 7 days after they get sick. Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods. People infected with the 2009 H1N1 are likely to have similar patterns of infectiousness as with seasonal flu.

Why are people with asthma at a higher risk of getting complications?

Anyone can get the flu (even healthy people), and serious problems from influenza can happen at any age. People of any age with asthma are more likely to get complications from influenza because they already have a chronic lung condition. Pneumonia, bronchitis, and sinus and ear infections are three examples of complications from flu. The flu can make chronic health problems worse. For example, people with asthma may experience asthma attacks while they have the flu.

Why is getting vaccinated with the seasonal flu shot and the H1N1 vaccine important?

There is a new seasonal flu shot each year because the seasonal flu virus keeps changing. A seasonal flu shot prepares the body to defend itself from the current type of seasonal flu. If a patient does still get the seasonal flu, it will usually be mild. People with asthma should get the seasonal flu shot. If a person with asthma is in between the ages of 6 months to 64 years old they are in the initial target group for the H1N1 vaccine according to the CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report released August 21, 2009.

References and Resources for the 2009 H1N1 flu and the Seasonal Flu:

Flu Clinic Locator is a Web site that provides a directory of public influenza clinics. The Flu Clinic Locator is published on the American Lung Association's Web site at www.flucliniclocator.org.

Avoid the Flu: Back to School Resource Kit contains basic information and communication resources to help school administrators implement recommendations from CDC. The resource kit can be found at <http://www.flu.gov/plan/school/toolkit.html> or www.flu.gov.

Asthma and Pandemic H1N1 Influenza ISDH has created an asthma and H1N1 fact sheet, to view this fact sheet please go to <http://www.injac.org/images/asthma%20and%20influenza.pdf>.

Indiana State Department of Health Immunization Program strives to prevent disease, disability, and death in children, adolescents, and adults through vaccination. To find out more information please visit <http://www.in.gov/isdh/17094.htm> or call the Indiana Family Helpline at 1-800-433-0746.

Pandemic (H1N1) Influenza Web site provides links to resources and answers frequently asked questions. To view this site please go to <http://www.in.gov/flu>.

Novel H1N1 flu (Swine flu) is a CDC Web site that provides up to date information and resources about H1N1. You can access these resources by logging onto <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/> or <http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/asthma.htm>.

Information for Health Professionals is a CDC Web site that provides information on influenza resources, surveillance, background, and flu vaccine bulletins. The Web site is accessible by going to www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals.

Data and Surveillance

Asthma Education

Asthma is a chronic disease and the inadequate or lack of knowledge, management and treatment among patients, has lead to many expensive hospitalizations and emergency department (ED) visits. Therefore health care professionals, who provide education to asthma patients or parents of children with asthma to control their disease, could have a significant effect on the reduction of the burden and costs associated with asthma.

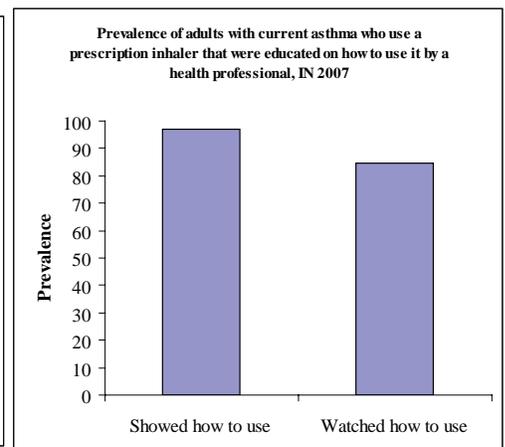
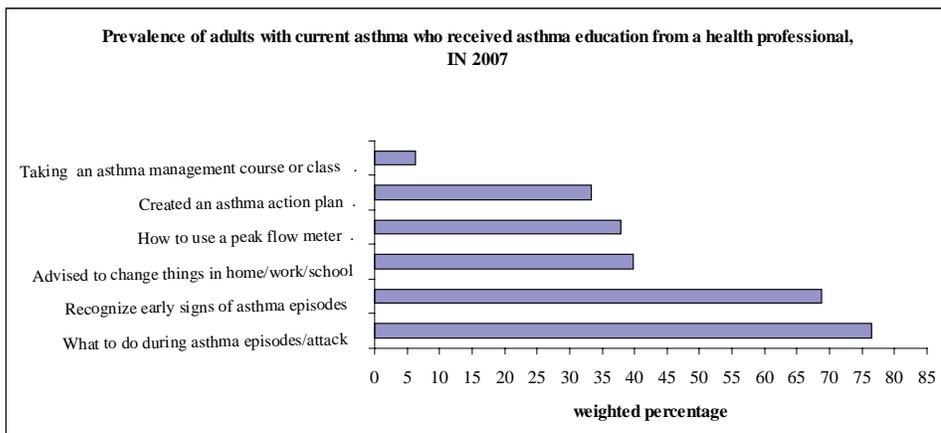
In order to gain some knowledge on this matter, questions were created and administered through the Asthma Call-Back Survey. The information in this newsletter is based on the 2007 Asthma Call-Back Survey (ACBS) of adults who currently had asthma. Of the three hundred and ninety one adults who participated in 2007 ACBS, three hundred and seven adults (78.5%) had current asthma. All of the data in this report is based on the weighted frequency or prevalence of this adult population in Indiana. The data selected for this article is based on the ACBS questions related to education.

Among all of the adults with current asthma:

- About 69% reported that a doctor or health professional had taught them how to recognize early signs or symptoms of an asthma episode or attack.

- Approximately 77% reported that they have been taught by a doctor or other health professional what to do during an asthma episode or attack.
- About 38% reported that they were taught by a doctor or other health professional how to use a peak flow meter to adjust their daily medication.
- Only 33.3% were given an asthma action plan by a doctor or other health professional.
- A very low percentage, 6.3 %, have ever taken a course or class on how to manage their asthma.
- Near 40% have been advised by a health professional to change things in their home, school, or work in order to improve their asthma.
- Approximately 97% of those who use a prescription inhaler were shown how to use it by a doctor or health care professional.
- About 85% who use a prescription inhaler were watched by a doctor or health professional to see how they used their inhaler.

Environmental asthma education, asthma action plans, and peak flow meter education needs to be highlighted when training health care professionals on how to provide asthma education to their patients. An increased knowledge in these areas could help to reduce the burden of asthma in Indiana.



*The Asthma Call Back Survey is an additional survey that follows the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System for eligible respondents. For more information about the ACBS, please refer to 2009 spring newsletter.

Around the State

Making the ‘Crossroads of America’ into Complete Streets

Partners from around Indiana gathered in June 2009 to begin working to ensure that the Crossroads of America include Complete Streets!

Complete streets are those designed and operated to enable safe access for all users - pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities – in moving along and across roadways. The poor air quality of our urban areas is linked to asthma and other respiratory diseases, and the use of transportation options can reduce emissions associated with auto-dependent travel. Integrating sidewalks, bike lanes, transit amenities, and safe crossings into the initial design of a project also spares the expense of costly retrofits at a later time.

Health by Design, AARP Indiana, and Bicycle Indiana are coordinating this effort to develop and implement state and local complete streets policies. Partners are also working to educate citizens and decision-makers about the critical need for transportation networks that are safer, enhance the livability of communities, and are welcoming to everyone. To learn more or to get involved, email info@healthbydesignonline.org or visit www.completestreets.org.

CDC Grant Update:

The Indiana State Department of Health Asthma Program has been awarded a five year grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to continue and expand their work to reduce the burden of asthma in Indiana! The new award is an increase of \$115,000 per year! The Asthma Program will use the additional funds to hire a full time Program Evaluator and a full time Environmental Health Specialist. The Asthma Program will also be working with Parkview Hospital in Allen County to implement an asthma self-management education program for patients seen in the Emergency Department for asthma. For more information on the grant award, please contact Trisha Dane at 317-233-7299 or tdane@isdh.in.gov.

InJAC Update

Dear InJAC Members:

Fall is here! It has been a busy summer for InJAC members and the IN State Asthma Program.

The Health Care Provider group has been incredibly productive. They have condensed 400+ pages of guidelines (NAEPP-EPR 3, 2007) into slideshow modules. Indiana University School of Medicine Division of Continuing Medical Education (CME) will be offering CME credit for health care providers who view the modules and complete a post test. The modules will be accessible from the InJAC Web site www.injac.org and the learner will be able to select one or more modules to pace their own learning. The goal is to increase the number of practitioners who deliver evidence-based asthma care.

The InJAC Child Care subgroup has partnered with the Family and Social Services Administration [FSSA] Child Care Health Consultant program and other child care organizations to provide FREE asthma trainings and materials to child care providers across the state. For this training a Child Care Health Consultant will provide asthma education and information to the child care provider’s staff through a personal presentation and folder of asthma materials. Additionally, participants will receive a cleaning spray bottle for getting rid of asthma triggers and a reusable birthday poster with steps to take during an asthma attack. The training covers: what asthma is, how to identify common asthma triggers, how to identify asthma symptoms, common asthma treatments, and the child care provider’s responsibilities for caring for a child with asthma. To find a consultant and schedule a time, visit: <http://www.in.gov/fssa/files/HealthConsultantsMap.pdf>

I hope to see all of you at our next quarterly meeting on December 17th so you can get the details on all of our activities!

- Marti Michel
InJAC President

Upcoming Events

Oct. 6 Asthma / Radon Evening Mini Conference in Fort Wayne, IN. The Allen County Department of Health, Parkview Hospital, Region 5 EPA, and the Allen County Asthma Coalition are partnering to bring this event. This event is free. For more information on this mini conference, call Jan Moore, 260-373-7996.

Oct. 13 Madison County Health Check Health Fair in Elwood, IN. This event will be held at Elwood St. Joe Center from 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Free health screenings and health risk assessment. Flu shots are \$30 however Medicaid and Medicare members get free flu shots. No pre-registration is required. If you have any questions, please e-mail RZacharyUAW@aol.com.

Oct. 16 Madison County Health Check Health Fair in Anderson, IN. At Anderson Mounds Mall from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. See above event for details. If you have any questions, please e-mail RZacharyUAW@aol.com.

Oct. 22 Addressing the Obesity Epidemic in the Heartland in West Lafayette, IN. This event will be held at Purdue University from 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. To find out more information on this event, please contact Amber Simons at asimons@purdue.edu or check out InSOPHE's website at www.insophe.org.

Nov. 4-5 Indiana Lead-Safe and Healthy Homes Conference in Indianapolis, IN. This event will be held at Marten House Hotel. For more information, visit the IKE Web site http://www.ikeycoalition.org/Lead_Conf_2009/Conf_Preview_2009.htm

Nov. 10-11 Indiana Association of School Nurses Fall Conference - Indiana School Nurses: Partners in Student Achievement in Indianapolis, IN. This event will be held at the Wyndham Hotel (Formerly Adams- Mark near the Indianapolis Airport) from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information on this event, you can log onto the www.inasn.org. Registration is available online.

Dec. 17 InJAC Quarterly Meeting in Indianapolis, IN. The meeting will be held at the Indiana State Department of Health (2 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN, 46204) in Rice Auditorium conference room at 9:00 a.m. For more information, please contact Kathy Such at 317-819-1181 Ext. 221 or ksuch@lungin.org.

Jan. 14-16 Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools National Symposium in Washington, DC. To find out more and/or register, please go to <http://www.iaqsymposium.com/index.html>.

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Breathe In, Breathe Out: Asthma in Indiana is a semi-annual newsletter published by the Indiana State Department of Health Asthma Program in conjunction with the Indiana Joint Asthma Coalition (InJAC). The purpose of this newsletter is to provide timely information on asthma to those interested in addressing the asthma burden in Indiana.

This newsletter is supported by Grant/Cooperative Agreement #U59/CCU525032 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.

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