

Asthma Insider

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CLINIC CORNER

Why I like the eAsthma Tracker

I am a private pediatrician with an office located in Provo. I have always had an interest in asthma and improving the quality of care for my patients with asthma. I have often felt in my practice that no matter how many times I review asthma protocols and medications with my patients, there are some who still have a difficult time managing their disease. There are not enough hours in the day to provide adequate teaching for this common problem.

For the past five years, I have been involved in a hospital-based team trying to standardize the care of patients hospitalized with asthma, to ensure they are getting the best care possible. However, most of the care I give my patients with asthma occurs in an office-based setting. During this time, I have often thought to myself: What about the care of patients who come to my office every day? How can I give them the best chance of living a normal life despite their asthma and keep them out of the hospital? When I was introduced to the eAsthma Tracker about a year ago, I felt that I finally had my answer.

The eAsthma Tracker has many great features from the standpoint of a physician taking care of patients. First, it gives the patient and family a sense of responsibility in taking care of their asthma.

It serves as a great reminder to keep on top of medication administration. It reinforces why patients are taking each medication and helps them to recognize when things are not working. It facilitates quick communication when problems arise and allows me to see patients or adjust medications in a timely manner to keep them as healthy as possible in order to prevent hospital admissions. As patients review and provide comments in the box at the end of page two, I feel it is almost like a journal, which helps them to recognize asthma triggers and other details regarding their disease and thus empowers them to take control of their health. In the age of shared accountability for medical care that is beginning right now, I anticipate that similar models will be developed for other chronic diseases. Thus, we are on the cutting edge of this new model of thinking, where physicians and patients work as a team to keep them healthy.

In short, the eAsthma Tracker is an exciting new tool which I feel can revolutionize the way we care for asthma.

The medications have not changed, but the ability of patients to understand their disease and how to take control of it brings us all to the forefront of quality medical care. I look forward to continuing to incorporate it into the care of my patients with asthma.

by Joseph M. Johnson, MD

FACEBOOK PAGE

Have you heard about the eAsthma Tracker (eAT) User's Facebook page?

Get the most out of the tips, facts, and information provided by interacting with other followers of the page. Leave your comments, questions, and stories so we can learn from one another.

Get involved and let's control asthma together!

To join, go to Facebook and type in E-Asthma Tracker User Group in your search box or click on the link below.

<https://www.facebook.com/easthmatracker>

by Stacey Riding

ASTHMA TRIGGERS

Asthma and triggers—two scary words on their own, but put them together and they can be deadly. Asthma is a predator in adults and children. How do you stop a predator? By studying and learning its behavior and tracking its movement. Figuring out what triggers asthma can lead to fewer attacks.

Asthma is temperamental—almost anything can set it off. We are aware of some of basic triggers like smoke, dust, and smog, but what about the lesser-known triggers?

Did you know weather can be a trigger? Or that thunderstorms release pollen into the air? Did you know asthma attacks can also be sparked by emotion? Laughing and crying can change breathing patterns and restrict air flow, another form

Foods that contain food additives like sodium, potassium, and sodium sulfite can cause attacks. Food coloring and flavoring are also triggers. Peppers can cause acid reflux, which is another major trigger in asthmatics. Acid backs up in the system and can cause a type of hyper reaction. Alcohol is another trigger due to some of the contents found in it.

Experts suggest that you have your inhaler handy if you're stuck in traffic. Traffic is a trigger because of all the smoke and smog build-up during rush hour. Last but not least is something found in almost every

Common Triggers	Uncommon Triggers
Allergies	Thunderstorms
Illness Respiratory infections, cold, flu	Emotions Laughing, crying, fear, anger
Temperature Changes	Stress
Cold Air	Food Allergies Nuts, chocolate, eggs, orange juice, fish, milk, peanut butter
Pollen	Food Coloring
Dust Mites	Food Additives Sodium, Potassium, Sodium Sulfite
Smoke Tobacco, fireplace, campfire	Aspirin
Mold	Acid Reflux
Pet Dander	Traffic
Strenuous Exercise	Scented Products Candles and Air Fresheners
Outdoor Pollution	Plants
	Tap Water
	Strong Odors Perfumes, sprays and cleaning products, paint, detergent, chemicals

Triggers can be found all over in places that we never even think about. Are asthmatics safe to go anywhere besides the doctor? Of course, but we have to keep these triggers in mind and by use the eAsthma Tracker to track our zones. With the help of the tracker we can manage and control an illness that's always on the home court. Let's take care of ourselves and each other by keeping track!

By Stacey Riding

Asthma Triggers

A respiratory condition marked by spasms in the bronchi of the lungs.

Cause an event or situation to happen or exist. Set off, provoke, prompt, stir up, or elicit.

of hyperventilation. Stress can also excite asthma symptoms to a higher level. It's said that even people without asthma can experience asthma-like symptoms due to stress.

Another trigger may be found in certain foods aside from the obvious like peanuts and eggs.

household: candles, especially scented ones. Strong scented candles are equivalent to aerosols; they attack the lungs very quickly. Other common triggers are plants and even tap water because it contains chlorine.

TIPS FOR WINTER EXERCISE

When you have asthma, winter can make exercise tough—but don't let the cold weather keep you or your kids from being active. Get outdoors on days where the air quality is good, or find a place to exercise indoors. Here are some tips to keep your family on the go during the cold winter months:

- Dress warmly. Choose layers to keep the heat in, and don't forget hats and gloves. Cold, dry air can make it tough to breathe. Wear a scarf or a face mask over the nose and mouth to help warm the air before it hits your lungs.
- Drink plenty of liquids before and after exercise keep the airways from getting dry, which could trigger an asthma attack.
- Talk to your doctor about which winter sports are appropriate for you. You may have to limit skiing, snowboarding, or ice skating if asthma is not properly controlled. Also ask your

doctor if you should be using a rescue med before exercising outdoors. It may be helpful to use a bronchodilator 20 minutes prior to your planned activity.

Resist the Urge to Hibernate

- Consider visiting an indoor swimming pool. Thanks to all that moisture, swimming can be a great exercise for those with asthma. Look for a well-ventilated facility free of mold and dirt, and be aware of chemicals used to treat the pool (find out when the pool is treated and avoid going on that day).
- When the weather is just too frightful, get moving indoors. Turn on music and dance, try some new yoga moves, or play a motion-controlled video game.

If you have concerns about asthma and outdoor exercise, discuss them with your doctor. He or she will know what level of activity is appropriate for you or your child.

By Jordan Gaddis

References

"Winter Exercise Tips for Asthmatics." MedicineNet.com. 2 Jan 2015.

<<http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=15994>>

TRACKER TIP

The eAsthma Tracker (eAT) is mobile friendly, making it easy to complete the Asthma Control Test (ACT) whenever—and wherever—it's convenient for you.

Log in to easthmatracker.com using the browser on your mobile device.

To make access even easier, save an eAT icon or website shortcut to your home screen. On most devices, simply click on the "Action" button and choose "Add to Home Screen."

This will create a shortcut that allows you to use the eAT like an app.



THE PROACTIVE PARENT

Those of us who have children with asthma may be just a little more aware of the poor air quality than others. So what can we—and our neighbors, friends, and coworkers—do about it?

Here are some tips to help us all be a little healthier while saving some hard-earned cash:

What can I do about poor air?

1. Be idle free. You've probably seen the stickers that remind you to be idle free. Whenever you have to wait more than a couple of minutes, save gas and reduce pollution by turning off your car while you wait.

2. Consider your travel options. Ideally, we'd all carpool with others or use public transit (such as UTA TRAX). But when that isn't convenient, an easier option is to combine your trips. For example, if you need to grocery shop, fill a prescription, and pick up the kids from school, try to do it in one trip. According to the U.S.

Department of Energy, combining errands into one trip can save you time and money: Several

short trips taken from a cold start use twice as much fuel as a longer multipurpose trip covering the same distance when the engine is warm.¹

3. Make healthy choices. Want to burn calories and save the environment? Walk! If you can't walk from your house, try parking in a central location

and walking to the stores you need to visit.² Or instead of driving from the office to get lunch, pack a healthy lunch and eat at work.

For more ideas, visit cleanair.utah.gov.

By Jordan Gaddis

References

1. U.S. Department of Energy. "Planning and Combining Trips." 11 Jan. 2015. <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/planning.shtml>
2. Utah Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Air Quality. "Choose Clean Air: 50 Winter Suggestions." 11 Jan. 2015. <http://www.cleanair.utah.gov/winter/50wintersuggs.htm>