

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- **Be Winter Ready**
- **Health Advocates**
- **Clinician's Corner**
- **Smoking Ban Helps Workers**
- **New WVAC Manager**

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Together

We Can Control Asthma

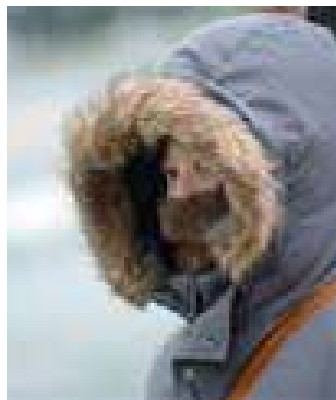
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Cold Weather Tips from WV-AEPP

Winter in West Virginia can be more wild than wonderful, and that means being prepared, especially if you have asthma. Why, just being outdoors and breathing in the cold air can cause an asthma attack! A few easy steps to take: People with asthma should cover their mouths with a scarf when outside. This warms the air, decreasing the chance of an attack.

Along with the wild weather, winter is cold and flu season. Having the common cold or other respiratory illness can lead to an asthma flare-up. That means protecting yourself from germs and those with illnesses as much as is possible. Make sure to wash your hands frequently to kill the germs that you may have picked up along the way.



One of the most important ways to defend yourself is to get an annual flu shot. Most doctor's offices, clinics and local health departments can provide the vaccination to you. For more information, please visit www.wvflu.org

Surviving the Holidays—with Asthma

When it comes to the holidays, we all can use a few tips on dealing with the hustle and bustle of the season. If you or a loved one have asthma, navigating holiday travel, family commitments and different environments can be tricky. The American Lung Association has tips to help you prepare and keep your asthma in control.

With a little preparation your holiday travel can be more asthma-friendly. The American Lung Association recommends you complete this checklist. [Click here](#) to download a printable version of this checklist.

Create an *Asthma Travel Pack* to ensure you have all of the medicines and instructions you need in one, easily accessible place.

When creating your *Asthma Travel Pack* consider including:

- Copies of your Asthma Action Plan
- An extra written prescription in case medication is lost or destroyed
- Insurance card and healthcare provider contact information
- Both quick-relief and controller medications (make sure there is enough to get you through your stay, and extra in case you get held-over unexpectedly)
- A spacer/chamber for your inhalers
- A Peak Flow Meter

Store your *Asthma Travel Pack* and medicines at the correct temperature.

Also, remember to keep track of your symptoms and medicine use. Tell your doctor if you use your rescue inhaler more than twice a week. Work with your doctor on an asthma action plan.

Other things you can do to prevent an asthma attack:

- ✱ Take prescribed medicines as directed, even if you feel OK
- ✱ Make sure that everyone in the family has received a flu shot
- ✱ Always make sure a quick-relief inhaler is available.
- ✱ Use a humidifier.
- ✱ Don't allow smoking in the home

For a downloadable action plan and the latest in asthma news, please visit our website www.wvasthma.org.

Medicines may be exposed to extreme temperatures if they are stored in luggage checked at the airport or in your car.

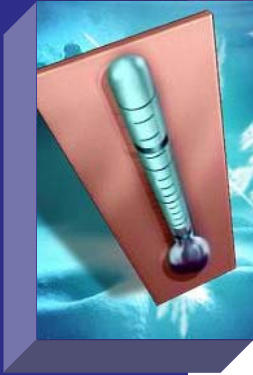
If your child is traveling along, ensure his/her caregivers have access to the *Asthma Travel Pack* and understand its contents, how to follow the instructions on the Asthma Action Plan, administer medicines, and know what to do during a breathing emergency.

For more about asthma and the holidays, visit www.lungusa.org

AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION.
IN WEST VIRGINIA

Lung Help-Line
Questions about
your lung health?
Ask an expert.
Call 1-800-548-8252

Become Winter-Ready



We've all experienced it. The crawl across the bottom of the television set during our favorite program; the loud and jarring bleats from our radios. In the winter months, these alarms usually signal bad weather.

It's great to know that bad weather is approaching, but being able to determine the particular type of threat can be frustrating. With that in mind, WVAEPP consulted the Weather Channel and prepared a winter weather "cheat-sheet".

When winter storms are approaching, pay special attention to these weather alerts:

Winter weather advisory - issued when a significant winter storm or hazardous winter weather is occurring, imminent, and is an inconvenience.

Winter storm warning - issued when a significant winter storm or hazardous winter weather is occurring, imminent, or likely and is a threat to life and property.

Blizzard warning - when winds that are at least 35 mph or greater, blowing snow that will frequently reduce visibility to a quarter-mile or less for at least three hours, and dangerous wind chills are expected in the warning area.

Heavy snow warning - issued if significant snowfall is expected; criteria vary depending on location

Wind chill index - the calculation of temperature that takes into consideration the effects of wind and temperature on the human body. (This is not the actual air temperature.)

For more information, please see www.weather.com

"An advocate can help ask questions, write down information and get the resources the patient needs."

Health Advocates

Receiving serious news about your health can be stressful. You're trying to listen to your doctor and ask questions, but you can often be overwhelmed. This is where a "health advocate" can be helpful.

They can be a family member, friend, or trusted colleague.

Dr. Carolyn Clancy is the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality:

"An advocate can help ask questions, write down information and get the resources the patient needs."

In many cases, a patient can be

concerned about the results of a health test they've taken. Dr. Clancy also recommends having an advocate for comfort purposes.

"This can be great support for the patient and also help them understand their options."

Learn more at hhs.gov.

Clinician's Corner

The Clinician's Corner is a new addition to our newsletter. Each quarter, we will request a brief article from a different Health Professional.

This month's submission is by Cindy Keely-Wilson, RRT. In addition to being the WV-AEPP Program Manager, Cindy works as a respiratory therapist at Charleston Area Medical Center.

"Action Against Asthma"

Asthma control is not well understood by many patients. It is our job as clinicians to find ways to determine and improve their understanding of asthma control. By developing ways, either by using an extensive curriculum, "one-on-one" method, or an asthma patient group method, will enable patients and their families to engage in practices in support

of the **6 GIP* priority messages from the NHLBI Guidelines**. In doing so, could result in patients and their families taking a more active role in the management of their asthma and leading to a better quality of life.

For more information, please contact Cindy at: cynthia.a.keely@wv.gov or visit our website www.wvasthma.org

*Guidelines Implementation Panel

Working Smokers' Health Improved by Smoking Bans

The health of bar workers, even those who actively smoke cigarettes, significantly improves after the introduction of a smoking ban, reveals research published ahead of print in *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*.

The findings are based on 371 bar workers from 72 Scottish bars, whose symptoms and lung function were assessed before the implementation of the ban on smoking in enclosed public places, and then two and twelve months afterwards.

In all, 191 workers underwent all three assessments, and the proportion reporting any respiratory symptoms fell from 69% to 57% after one year.

The proportion of those with sensory symptoms (runny nose, red eyes, sore throat) also fell from 75% to 64%.

Among non-smokers the proportion of those with phlegm and red eyes fell, respectively, from 32% to 14%, and from 44% to 18%.

But the effects were also seen among those who continued to smoke themselves. The proportions of smokers reporting wheeze fell from almost half (48%) to one in three (31%), and those reporting breathlessness fell from 42% to 29%.

The authors conclude that their findings reinforce the benefits on health of a smoking ban in public places, but they also show that those who continue to smoke also stand to gain.

It is thought that the ban may have boosted the numbers of smokers indulging their habit at home, so exposing their children to greater levels of environmental tobacco smoke. More attention now needs to be paid to this, the authors warn.

Source: [British Medical Journal](#)



Smoking and Asthma in West Virginia

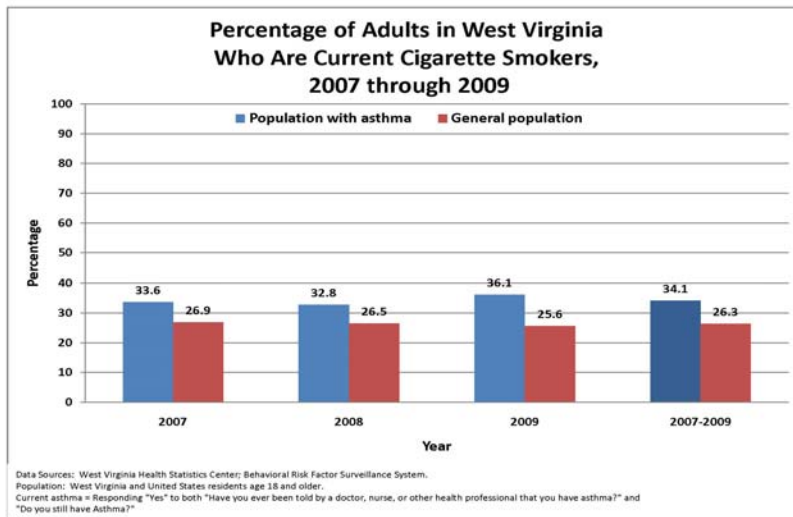
The percentage of West Virginians with asthma who are current smokers continues to be greater than the percentage of smokers in the general population.

Sharon Hill, WVAEPP Epidemiologist—Surveillance

For every \$1 spent on helping smokers quit, Mountain State would see \$1.25 return

A new study released today by the American Lung Association, and conducted by researchers at Penn State University, finds that helping smokers quit not only saves lives but also offers favorable economic benefits to states across the nation, including West Virginia. The study, titled *Smoking Cessation: the Economic Benefits*, provides a nationwide cost-benefit analysis that compares the costs to society of smoking with the economic benefits of states providing cessation coverage.

www.wordpress.wvasthma.com



Graph courtesy of Sharon Hill, WVAEPP Epidemiologist—Surveillance



Arthritis Foundation Tai Chi I Workshop

- When:** March 31 and April 1, 2011
9:00 – 5:00 both days
- Where:** Beckley Holiday Inn
114 Dry Hill Road
Beckley, WV 25801
- Cost:** Funding provided by
WV Osteoporosis & Arthritis Program
(Includes Manual, DVD, Materials and Lunch)
- Expectations:**
Must teach Tai Chi classes within 6 months

Arthritis Foundation Tai Chi® is designed to improve the quality of life for people with arthritis using Sun Style Tai Chi, one of the four major recognized styles of Tai Chi. This style includes agile steps and exercises that may improve mobility, breathing and relaxation. The movements don't require deep bending or squatting, which makes it easier and more comfortable to learn. If you would like to teach this program in your community, or for more information, please contact the Arthritis Foundation at **513-271-4545 x302**



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laying the groundwork for tomorrow's
communities

Mark Your Calendar!



- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1/13-15/11 | IAQ Tools for Schools Symposium, Washington, D.C. |
| 1/26/11 | Asthma & COPD Awareness Day at the Capitol |
| 2/3/11 | Asthma Friendly Schools Initiative Breakfast at the Cultural Center |
| 2/24/11 | Winter Quarterly Meeting – Webinar |
- For more information, please contact Lindsay Elkins at lilkins@lunginfo.org**

Introducing the New WVAC Manager

As the new West Virginia Asthma Coalition manager, I wanted to take the opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Lindsay Elkins and I assumed the role of WVAC manager following the resignation of Megan Moore Canavan. I look forward to the opportunity to work with the WVAC, as well as the opportunity to learn more about asthma and the ways that we can combat this problem in our great state.

I am a 2008 graduate of West Virginia Wesleyan College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Relations. I am currently working on my Master of Science degree in Integrated Marketing Communications and will finish up in December 2010. Before coming to the American Lung Association



**New WVAC Manager
Lindsay Elkins**

ation (ALA), I was the Assistant Director of Admission at West Virginia Wesleyan College. Because of my role there and the management of a large number of incoming freshmen students,

I feel confident that I can assist the WVAC in a great number of ways. While I might be new to the asthma program, I actually started with the ALA in September working with the RAZE program, specifically working with the Division of Tobacco Prevention – Youth Tobacco Program.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding the coalition. I can be reached at lilkins@lunginfo.org.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you. I look forward to this adventure!

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