

BREATHING EASIER: ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OF ASTHMA

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OBJECTIVES

After attending this webinar, participants will be able to:

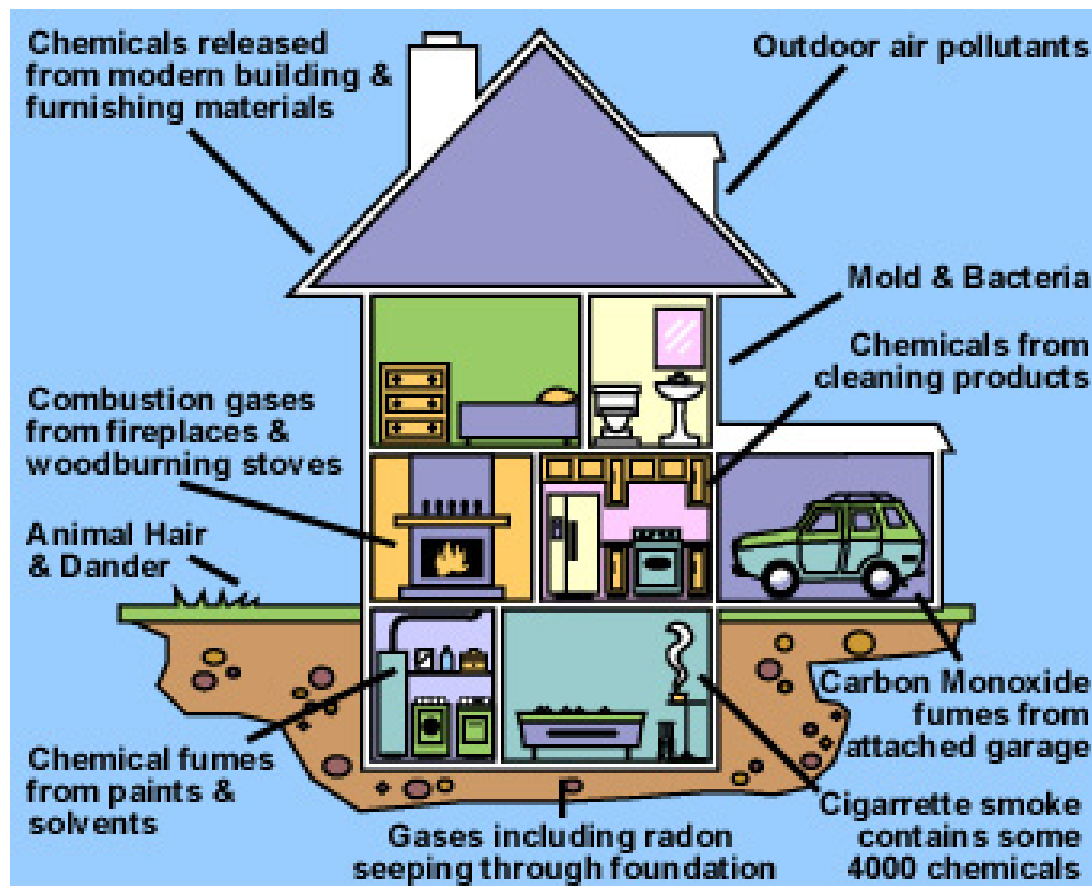
1. Explain the importance of environmental exposures in asthma morbidity
2. Select or create an efficient environmental screening tool for office practice
3. Provide patients/families with brief focused counseling to reduce common exposures
4. Identify two community resources for patients with challenging environmental issues

Outline

- Why environment matters
- Screening for exposures
- Practical counseling
- When counseling is not enough
- Resources



Indoor Air Quality



<http://www.epa.gov/apti/course422/ap4.html>

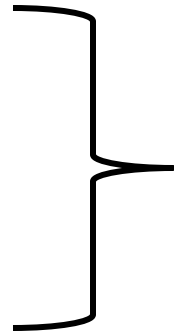
Indoor Air Quality

- Children spend more time indoors than outdoors
 - Preschool children spend up to 90% of their time indoors, 50% in bedroom
 - School age children may spend 30-50 hours/week in and around school buildings
- Indoor air is unregulated except for smoking laws
- Outdoor air quality affects indoor air quality (diesel exhaust, pollens)



Asthma morbidity clearly associated with exposure to ...

- Cockroach
- House dust mite
- Mouse
- Pet dander



when sensitized

- Tobacco smoke



Rosenstreich, et al. NEJM. 336(19):1356-63, 1997 May 8

Peat et al. Aust NZ J Med 1994;24:270-6

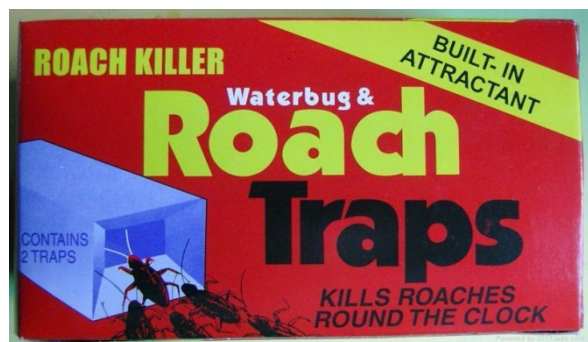
Sources of Outdoor Air Pollutants

- Mobile sources: cars & trucks
- Power plants
- Other industry
- Incinerators
- Minor sources



You *can* make a difference

- Tailored education and multifaceted interventions *can* reduce asthma symptoms
 - May reduce dependence on medication
- Efforts to target single exposures may show benefits but are difficult to sustain



Evans, R et al. 1999. National Cooperative Inner-City Asthma Study. J Pediatr. 135(3):332-8.

Outline

- Why environment matters
- Screening for exposures
- Practical counseling
- When counseling is not enough
- Resources



Assessing Environmental Exposures

- Screening questionnaire at least annually (parent vs. clinician-administered)
 - Build into EHR template
- Targeted review of known exposures during follow-up or urgent visits
- Consider further probing during periods of poor control



Environmental History Form for Pediatric Asthma Patient

Specify that questions related to the child's home also apply to other indoor environments where the child spends time, including school, daycare, car, school bus, work, and recreational facilities.

	Follow up/ Notes
Is your child's asthma worse at night?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Is your child's asthma worse at specific locations? If so, where? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Is your child's asthma worse during a particular season? If so, which one? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Is your child's asthma worse with a particular change in climate? If so, which? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Can you identify any specific trigger(s) that makes your child's asthma worse? If so, what? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Have you noticed whether dust exposure makes your child's asthma worse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Does your child sleep with stuffed animals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Is there wall-to-wall carpet in your child's bedroom?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Have you used any means for dust mite control? If so, which ones? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Do you have any furry pets?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Do you see evidence of rats or mice in your home weekly?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Do you see cockroaches in your home daily?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Do any family members, caregivers or friends smoke?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Does this person(s) have an interest or desire to quit?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Does your child/teenager smoke?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Do you see or smell mold/mildew in your home?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Is there evidence of water damage in your home?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Do you use a humidifier or swamp cooler?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Have you had new carpets, paint, floor refinishing, or other changes at your house in the past year?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Does your child or another family member have a hobby that uses materials that are toxic or give off fumes?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Has outdoor air pollution ever made your child's asthma worse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Does your child limit outdoor activities during a Code Orange or Code Red air quality alert for ozone or particle pollution?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Do you use a wood burning fireplace or stove?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Do you use unvented appliances such as a gas stove for heating your home?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Does your child have contact with other irritants (e.g., perfumes, cleaning agents, or sprays)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure

What other concerns do you have regarding your child's asthma that have not yet been discussed?

Environmental History Form for Pediatric Asthma Patient

Specify that questions related to the child's home also apply to other indoor environments where the child spends time, including school, daycare, car, school bus, work, and recreational facilities.

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Is your child's asthma worse during a <u>particular season</u> ? If so, which one? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Is your child's asthma worse with a particular <u>change in climate</u> ? If so, which? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Can you identify any specific trigger(s) that makes your child's asthma worse? If so, what? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Have you noticed whether dust exposure makes your child's asthma worse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Does your child sleep with <u>stuffed animals</u> ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
Is there <u>wall-to-wall carpet</u> in your child's bedroom?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure



Living Situation: Row House House Apartment Basement Apartment

Worst Place(s) in Home: Bedroom Living/Family Room Bathroom Kitchen Other

Exposures in Home: Dust Mold - Mildew Smell - Water Damage Roaches/Waterbugs Mice/Rats Dogs

Cats Birds ETS Fireplace-Wood-burning Stove-Heat Source Incense/Candles Eats in BR Perfumes

Bed/Bedroom where child sleeps: Hypoallergenic Mattress Pad Hypoallergenic Pillow Cover

Stuffed Animals Carpet/Rugs Humidifier

Management Company / Landlord: _____

Public Housing?: Y / N ☐ HAP **Concern:** _____



Asthma Action Plan

Name	School	DOB / /
Health Care Provider	Provider's Phone	
Parent/Responsible Person	Parent's Phone	
Additional Emergency Contact	Contact Phone	

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

Place Patient Label Here

Asthma Severity (see reverse side)

☐ Intermittent or
Persistent: ☐ Mild ☐ Moderate ☐ Severe

Asthma Control

☐ Well-controlled ☐ Needs better control

Asthma Triggers Identified (Things that make your asthma worse):

☐ Colds ☐ Smoke (tobacco, incense) ☐ Pollen ☐ Dust ☐ Animals
☐ Strong odors ☐ Mold/moisture ☐ Pests (rodents, cockroaches)
☐ Stress/emotions ☐ Gastroesophageal reflux ☐ Exercise
☐ Season: Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer ☐ Other:

Date of
Last Flu
Shot:

/ /

Green Zone: Go!—Take these CONTROL (PREVENTION) Medicines EVERY Day



You have ALL of these:

- Breathing is easy
- No cough or wheeze
- Can work and play
- Can sleep all night

Peak flow in this area:

_____ to _____
(More than 80% of Personal Best)

Personal best peak flow: _____

- ☐ No control medicines required. Always rinse mouth after using your daily inhaled medicine.
- ☐ _____, _____ puff(s) inhaler with spacer _____ times a day
Inhaled corticosteroid or inhaled corticosteroid/long-acting β -agonist
- ☐ _____, _____ nebulizer treatment(s) _____ times a day
Inhaled corticosteroid
- ☐ _____, take _____ by mouth once daily at bedtime
Leukotriene antagonist
- For asthma with exercise, ADD:
- ☐ _____, _____ puff(s) inhaler with spacer 15 minutes before exercise
Fast-acting inhaled β -agonist
- For nasal/environmental allergy, ADD:
- ☐ _____

Yellow Zone: Caution!—Continue CONTROL Medicines and ADD QUICK-RELIEF Medicines

Triggers can cause asthma symptoms.

What Are Your Triggers?

- ☐ Cigarette Smoke
- ☐ Colds & Viruses
- ☐ Weather Changes
- ☐ Hot Air or Cold Air
- ☐ Cats
- ☐ Dogs
- ☐ Odors & Perfumes
- ☐ Cleaning Products
- ☐ Exercise
- ☐ Mold
- ☐ Pollution
- ☐ Pollen
- ☐ Dust Mites
- ☐ Cockroaches
- ☐ Rats & Mice



Not everyone has the same triggers.

Outline

- Why environment matters
- Screening for exposures
- Practical counseling
- When counseling is not enough
- Resources



Cockroaches

- Need warmth
- Need water
- Need source of food – same as us
 - Kitchen
 - Where food is consumed
 - At home – where we watch TV



Cockroach Control



- Limit their access to food
 - Keep food in sealed containers
 - Clean up all spilled food
- Eliminate water - leaky plumbing, leaky roof

House Dust Mites

- Need warmth
- Need high humidity
- Need source of food
- Live in mattresses, upholstered furniture and carpet



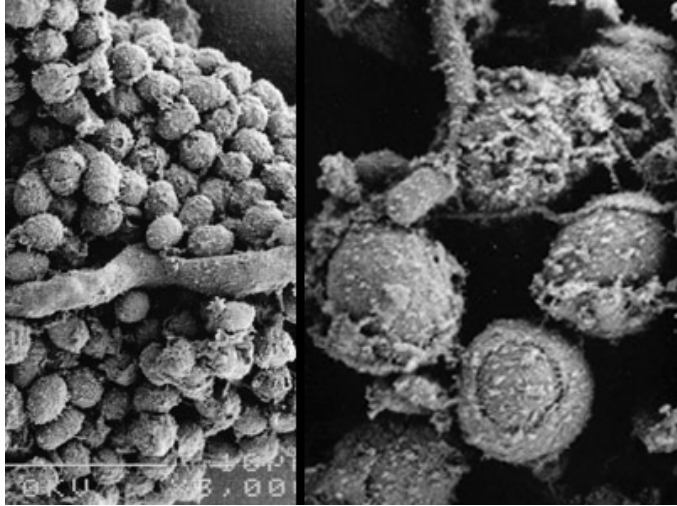


House Dust Mite Control

- Keep humidity below 50% \Rightarrow air conditioner in summer (In school buildings - even if closed)
- Remove carpeting
- Damp mop floor surface

Molds

- Need water
- Need source of food – wallpaper, wood, or cardboard
- Can cause both allergic and irritant effects





Mold Control

- Keep humidity below 50% \Rightarrow air conditioner in summer (In school buildings - even if closed)
- Fix leaks and clean up spills within 48 hours



Pets

- Cats
 - Dogs
 - Rodents
 - Birds - possibly from dust mites in feathers
 - Danders can track from home to car to school
- Personal choice at home
 - NO PETS in school



Environmental Tobacco Smoke

- Every family with a smoker should be referred to
 - 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669) or
 - www.smokefree.gov

What are you *smoking*?



How to Reduce Your Exposure to Triggers

- ☐ Don't bring food into the bedroom
- ☐ Keep pets out of the bedroom
- ☐ Caulk holes and cracks in walls and corners
- ☐ Remove carpets and rugs from the bedroom
- ☐ Wipe off dust regularly with a damp cloth
- ☐ Remove extra dust-collecting items from the bedroom
- ☐ Put away stuffed animals and toys in a bag or box
- ☐ Use zipper-encased, allergy-free bedding and pillowcases
- ☐ Replace curtains with **shades** or **blinds**
- ☐ Don't smoke inside the house
- ☐ Keep the windows closed during allergy season
- ☐ Keep indoor humidity under 50%
- ☐ Use only HEPA vacuums and air purifiers
- ☐ Tell your landlord (or call 311) to get rid of mold
- ☐ Use 'green' cleaning supplies or water and vinegar

You can reduce your exposure to triggers.



Make your bedroom trigger-free.

FURRY PETS AND BIRDS

If your child is allergic to a pet...

- ❑ If possible, find a new home for the family pet. Separating pets from the family is sometimes the only solution to pet allergies.
- ❑ Keeps pets outside the house.
- ❑ Never allow pets in your child's bedroom.
- ❑ Keep pets off furniture and out of cars.
- ❑ Have your child wash hands after playing with animals and keep face away from fur.
- ❑ Vacuum, mop, and clean surfaces with a wet cloth frequently.
- ❑ Consider getting a portable air cleaner with HEPA* filter for child's room.
- ❑ Other special goals:



*HEPA = high efficiency particulate air

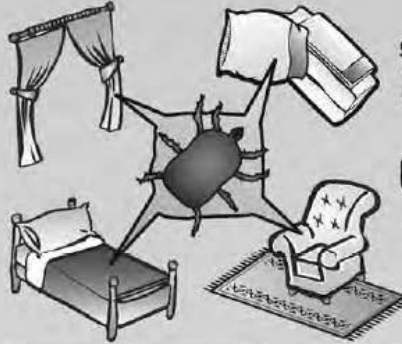
For more information visit us: www.impact-dc.org

Revised 08/10/09

DUST MITES

Dust mites are tiny microscopic relatives of the spider and live on mattresses, bedding, upholstered furniture, carpets and curtains.

These tiny creatures feed on the flakes of skin that people and pets



shed daily and they thrive in warm and humid environments.

No matter how clean a home is, dust mites cannot be totally eliminated. However, the number of mites can be reduced by following the suggestions below.

Preventive Strategies

- Encase your mattress and pillows in dust-proof or allergen impermeable covers (available from specialty supply mail order companies or some bedding and department stores).
- Wash all bedding and blankets once a week in hot water (at least 130-140° F) to kill dust mites. Non-washable bedding can be frozen overnight to kill dust mites.
- Replace wool or feathered bedding with synthetic materials and traditional stuffed animals with washable ones.
- If possible, replace wall-to-wall carpets in bedrooms with bare floors (linoleum, tile or wood) and remove fabric curtains and upholstered furniture.
- Use a damp mop or rag to remove dust. Never use a dry cloth since this just stirs up mite allergens.
- Use a dehumidifier or air conditioner to maintain relative humidity at about 50% or below.
- Use a vacuum cleaner with either a double-layered microfilter bag or a HEPA filter to trap allergens that pass through a vacuum's exhaust.
- Wear a mask while vacuuming to avoid inhaling allergens, and stay out of the vacuumed area for 20 minutes to allow any dust and allergens to settle after vacuuming.

Pollen



- Avoid outdoor activity and keep windows closed during early afternoon in spring
- Wash hands and face after coming inside
- Shower at bedtime
- Consider intranasal steroids

Air Quality Index

Descriptors	Cautionary Statement
Good 0 – 50	No message
Moderate 51 – 100	Unusually sensitive individuals
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups 101 – 150	Identifiable groups at risk - different groups for different pollutants
Unhealthy 151 – 200	General public at risk; sensitive groups at greater risk
Very Unhealthy 201 - 300	General public at greater risk; sensitive groups at greatest risk

AIRNow - www.airnow.gov

AIRNow - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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A cross-agency U.S. Government Web site. See a complete [list of AIRNow partner agencies](#). Search: **GO**

AIRNOW Quality of Air Means Quality of Life

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Key Topics:

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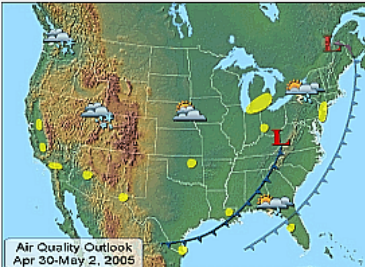
Resources

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National Overview

Today's Forecast | [Ozone Now](#) | [Particles Now](#) | [Outlook](#)

National Air Quality Outlook - click for larger map



May 2nd, 2005

National Outlook:
Good to Moderate air quality is expected across the U.S. through Monday.

[Today's Forecast](#)

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Local Resources


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Web cam

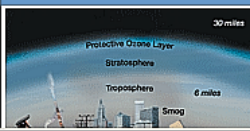


[Current visibility in Boston, MA](#)

[EXIT AIRNOW](#)

[View other Web cams](#)

Good Up High Bad Nearby



New High Resolution Haze Web Cams debut on CAMNET: Two sites in the Boston area have new, high resolution cameras as part of CAMNET, an online network that uses digital cameras to monitor air pollution and visibility at various locations on the Northeast. The new cameras are located at the Blue Hill Observatory, the oldest continuously operating weather station in North America, and on the North Shore. Each site has a pair of 8 megapixel cameras to provide a horizontal range of view of 120 degrees, four times wider than the original cameras.

[Boston Haze Cam](#) | [Blue Hill Haze Cam](#) | [CAMNET](#) [EXIT AIRNOW](#)

Free Bus Rides in Knoxville, TN on Air Quality Alert days: Knoxville Area



AQI
AIR QUALITY INDEX

Good

Outline

- Why environment matters
- Screening for exposures
- Practical counseling
- When counseling is not enough
- Resources





Engaging Families To Reduce Home Environmental Asthma Triggers



Kate Scott, MPH, RN
Margret Schnitzer, MSW



The Baltimore City Asthma Program

- Focus
 - Reduction of home environmental triggers
 - Asthma medical case management
- Target Population
 - Children with moderate to severe asthma
 - Attending Baltimore City Public Schools





Community Asthma Program

- **Goals**

- Decrease
 - asthma morbidity
 - asthma symptom days
 - use of urgent health services
- Increase
 - Provider knowledge of home environment and communication with families
 - Family understanding of medical and environmental asthma mgmt

- **Intervention**

3 home visits over 4 months with 6 month follow-up

- Medication and technique review
- Identification of asthma triggers
- Trigger reduction education
- Coordination with providers

Social Determinants of Health

How do they affect efforts to reduce asthma triggers?

- Individual behaviors
 - RAID spray
 - 'Everyone I know has pests'
 - Competing high-level priorities
- Social environment
 - Lack of knowledge of IPM
 - Multiple life stressors
- Physical environment
 - Row homes
- Health services
 - Don't address environmental asthma triggers





Environmental Intervention

- One-on-one teaching / motivational interviewing
- IPM teaching and pest supplies
 - Baits, gel, filling holes
- Green cleaning supplies
- Mattress and pillow covers
 - Put them on with the family
- Tenant/landlord rights and responsibilities
- Encounter form
 - Report sent to medical provider about environmental triggers and asthma management after each visit



Lessons Learned

BCHD

- Partnering with the medical community is essential in managing asthma triggers

Providers

- Ask about pests and smoking habits
- Have hand-outs available to address environmental issues and tobacco harm reduction techniques



DC's Healthy Asthma Homes Program

- Run by District Department of the Environment (DDOE)
- Home visit and health hazards evaluation
- Detailed report to landlord
- Materials and education for family
- Referrals and coordination with DC agencies
- Case management up to 1 year

DISTRICT
DEPARTMENT
OF THE
ENVIRONMENT





Legal Advocacy to Support Families in the Environmental Management of Asthma



Joy M. Purcell, Esq.
Senior Attorney

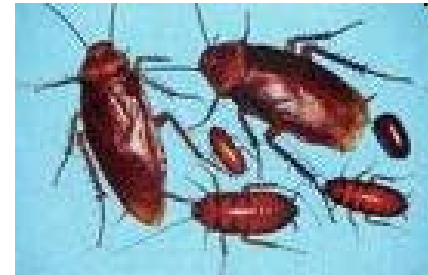


CLC's Medical-Legal Partnership -- Healthy Together

- Attorneys on-site at our medical partners:
 - **Children's National Medical Center** – 4 locations in D.C.
 - **Mary's Center** — located in the Adams Morgan neighborhood
- Three primary practice areas:
 1. **Education/Special Education**
 - school discipline for children with special needs
 - access to education for a child with a health condition or physical disability
 - special education
 2. **Housing Conditions**
 - lead, mold, rats, infestations
 - accessibility issues that impact children's health
 3. **Access to Health Care**
 - termination of medically necessary health care services including mental health services
 - MCO denial of a medically necessary service

What types of housing conditions do our families frequently face?

- Tenants are entitled to safe, habitable housing
- A landlord who fails to remedy housing code violations within a reasonable period of time is violating the law
- Common housing conditions:
 - Pest and vermin infestations
 - Mold
 - Cracked and/or peeling paint
 - Leaks
 - Sewage overflow





What self-advocacy steps can a family take?

- Document existing housing code violations
 - Photographs
 - Written notice to landlord, keep dated copies
 - Request formal inspection by agency responsible for building and housing inspections
 - Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs or D.C. Housing Authority
- Provide landlords with information about the impact of the housing code violations on family's life



How can health care providers help families advocate for themselves?

- Help families identify housing conditions
 - Ask parents if they have any concerns about the condition of their home
- Educate families about their right to safe, habitable housing
 - Make sure families know that they don't have to live with housing code violations
 - Remind them to document housing conditions and contact their landlords to request repairs
- Provide families with tools to use in their advocacy
 - Written advocacy letters to submit to their landlords
 - Information about how common conditions (infestations, mold) can exacerbate existing health conditions



What legal options do families have if a landlord fails to make repairs?

Formal legal options vary by state



District of Columbia:

- **Housing Conditions Calendar** allows tenants to file affirmatively against their landlord to enforce the housing code
- Tenants may also follow formal procedures to notify their landlord of the violations and withhold rent due to housing code violations
- *Maryland and Virginia do not have a housing conditions court* that allows tenants to file affirmatively against their landlords

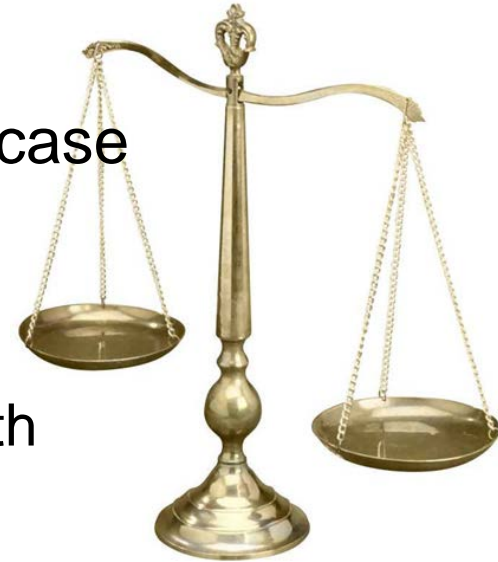


What can families expect from legal assistance provider?

- Intake interview to determine legal options
- Families should be prepared to provide all documents related to their housing concerns
- The tenant and attorney can determine the best option to assist the family in securing habitable housing conditions
- Options to secure transfers to other housing are limited—tenants may only be entitled to obtain repairs to their current housing

How can health care providers support families taking legal action?

- Provide families with tools to use in their legal case
 - Affidavits
 - Medical records
 - Information about how common conditions (infestations, mold) can exacerbate existing health conditions
- Provide testimony in court
 - Testimony regarding a child's medical conditions may be compelling
 - Testimony about the impact of housing code violations on the family's health may help educate a judge



Summary – *Tips for Real Life Practice!*

- Use a screening tool while patients wait
- Ask about all places the child spends time
- Ask about smoke exposure
- Have non-judgmental approach
- Keep educational handouts and resource list on hand
- Document what you do!
 - “Counseled patient/family about identified exposures/triggers.”
 - “Provided patient/family information on reducing environmental triggers.”
 - “Referred patient/family to XXX for assistance with home conditions.”



Resources

- National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF)
www.neefusa.org
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
www.epa.gov/asthma/publications.html
- Clinical Effort Against Secondhand Tobacco Exposure (CEASE) www.massgeneral.org/ceasetobacco
- Improving Asthma Care in the District of Columbia (IMPACT DC) www.impact-dc.org

Regional Legal Support

District of Columbia:

Children's Law Center
616 H Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 467-4900, Option 3 (Helpline)



Virginia:

Legal Services of Northern Virginia
6066 Leesburg Pike, Suite 500
Falls Church, VA 22041
(703) 778-6800



Maryland:

Legal Aid Bureau
500 East Lexington Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
(800) 999-8904



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Healthy Homes Programs

Baltimore City Asthma Program

1800 N. Charles St. 5th Floor

Baltimore, Maryland 21201

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www.baltimorehealth.org/asthma

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- Region 3
- Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, & the District of Columbia
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- 202-471-4829
- www.childrensnational.org/macche



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Questions?