

## Welcome to the Livingston, NJ Nursing Department

Livingston Senior & Community Center  
204 Hillside Avenue  
Livingston, NJ 07039  
Tel: 973 535-7961 - Fax: 973 535-7993

### MAY IS ASTHMA AWARENESS MONTH

The Livingston Nursing Division wishes to review the health effects of air pollution and asthma and the best ways to manage the disease. Asthma is a disease that affects your lungs. It is seen more frequently in children but adults have asthma too. The disease causes repeated episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness and coughing in the early morning and at nighttime. The medical profession does not know the cause or the cure for asthma, but we do know that “you can control your asthma by being aware of the things that trigger an attack and following the advice of your health-care provider.” We know that if someone in your family has asthma, you are more likely to have it.

An asthma attack may occur when you are exposed to triggers in the environment such as dust mites, smoke, outdoor pollution, pets, mold, strenuous physical exercise, and bad weather such as high humidity, thunderstorms or freezing temperatures. There are also certain foods, food additives or medicines that may trigger an attack. Strong emotional states can lead to hyperventilation and an asthma attack.

You can control your asthma by taking your prescribed medication exactly as the physician directed. There are various medicines to control asthma. Some are inhaled or breathed in and some can be taken as a pill. Asthma medications are available in two types: quick relief and long term control. Each person under the care of their physician will have an individual plan. The important thing is to remember that you can control your asthma.

**Air pollution can make asthma symptoms worse!** Two key air pollutants are ozone and particle pollution. Get to know how sensitive you are to air pollution. Notice when your symptoms increase: when you are physically active, after you have been outdoors in polluted air, hot summer days in the afternoon and evening, busy roads, near factories, where there is smoke or haze? Listen to your body. If you get symptoms when the air is polluted, stop your activity. Find another, less intense one. Exercise in the morning when there is less pollution. Keep your medication as scheduled and have the quick-relief medicine at hand. **Get daily information on local air quality on radio and TV reports.** The internet has reports at [www.epa.gov/airnow](http://www.epa.gov/airnow).

[www.cdc.gov/asthma](http://www.cdc.gov/asthma)  
[www.cdc.gov/asthma/faqs.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/faqs.htm)