



World Asthma Day and Asthma Awareness Month

Together we can help control asthma.

This World Asthma Day (May 1, 2012) and Asthma Awareness Month (May) the [National Asthma Education and Prevention Program \(NAEPP\)](#) encourages you to discover *how*.



One of the first steps—whether you have asthma or know someone who does—is to develop a [written asthma action plan \(AAP\)](#) in partnership with your healthcare provider. AAPs that meet the specific needs of a patient include details ranging from how to take medication to reduce airway inflammation, to ways to reduce environmental triggers of asthma such as dust mites or tobacco smoke.

But AAPs don't stand alone.

They are part of a comprehensive approach needed to improve asthma care and control. Like diabetes or high blood pressure, managing asthma symptoms requires daily attention and ongoing education.

An APP is just one of the following six key actions, recommended by the [NAEPP](#), that clinicians, patients, and all others who touch the life of someone with asthma can work together on to seize control of asthma so that asthma doesn't seize control of asthma patients.

[Use inhaled corticosteroids](#) to control asthma if you have persistent asthma. Your doctor will help you choose the best treatment.

[Use a written asthma action plan](#) to highlight two things: 1) what to do daily to control your asthma, and 2) how to handle symptoms or asthma attacks.

[Assess asthma severity](#) at the initial visit to determine what treatment to start to get your asthma under control.

[Assess and monitor how well controlled your asthma is](#) at follow up visits. Your doctor may need to increase, or decrease your medicine to keep asthma under control.

[Schedule follow-up visits](#) at periodic intervals, and at least every six months.

[Control environmental exposures](#) such as allergens or irritants that worsen your asthma.

When taken with these other actions, AAPs can help people with asthma live without limits. The NAEPP has identified personalized AAPs as "must-haves" for *all* asthma patients, particularly those with moderate and severe asthma, a history of asthma attacks, or poorly controlled asthma.

It may take time to develop and guide a patient through an AAP on the front end, but providing patients with detailed instructions and educating them on how to manage their asthma themselves will ultimately save clinicians time and effort on the back end. And, if followed as one of the NAEPP's six recommended actions, it could ultimately save lives.

Currently, only about one in three patients with asthma has an AAP to guide them. So, for this World Asthma Day and throughout Asthma Awareness Month, the NAEPP and NACI encourage those without an AAP to get one.

It takes an entire community—people from all sectors—to help create the type of care and environments that will make it easier for the one in 12 Americans who has asthma to breathe more easily and live life more fully.

Join the NAEPP and its partners in working toward this goal in May and beyond, by using and sharing the resources in the box above.

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[NACI In the Know eNewsletter](#) - Vol. 9, Spring-Summer, 2012

[NIH Radio Interviews Dr. James Kiley, Director of the Division of Lung Diseases, on the occasion of Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month](#) - May 18, 2012

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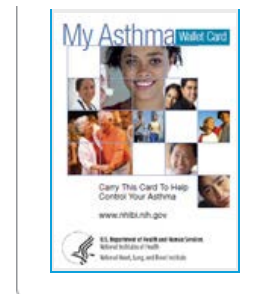
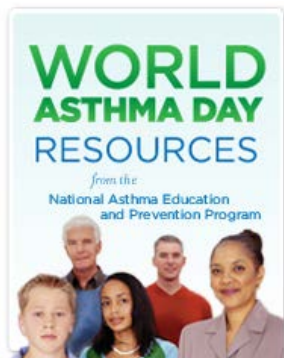
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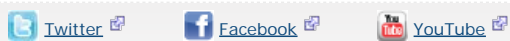
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