

May Health News

Healthy Habits for School Success

May is National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) has declared May to be “National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month.” It’s now the peak season for allergy and asthma sufferers. Allergic disease is the leading cause of missed school days for children. Make sure your child’s teachers and school nurse are aware of your child’s asthma and seasonal allergies so they can provide the necessary help.

During an Asthma attack, airways become narrowed and breathing can become extremely difficult. Other asthma triggers include: respiratory infections, pollen (trees, grasses, weeds) air pollution, food, allergies, cleaning products, perfumes, exercise, and cold air exposure. Common asthma symptoms include wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness, and coughing. Asthma cannot be cured but it can be controlled.

Remember, classroom windows are open and the students do go outside for recess and lunch if weather permits. It is essential that children have their allergy medication before going outdoors, due to the high Pollen Count this time of year.

Please remind your children to wash their hands and not touch their faces after coming in from outside. In the nurse’s office, I can rinse eyes if necessary with tap water and give ice packs to apply to irritated eyes. It is important for children to have time to run and play outside. If reducing exposure to allergens isn’t possible or is ineffective, medicines can help ease allergy symptoms. There are many non-drowsy antihistamines, nasal sprays and eye drops available as a prescription and over the counter. Many of these medicines can be taken at home once a day.

Speak to your physician about what would be best for your child and remember that I need a consent form from the parent and a physician’s order to give medications at school.

Hoping for an early and sunny spring with minimal allergy symptoms!

Nurse Alfaro