May 28 PVAC Meeting: How is COVID impacting People with Asthma?

Join us for a discussion of COVID and asthma with specific focus on the following and listening to questions/concerns:

- Updates on Springfield Healthy Homes Asthma program's pivot to address COVID-19 and results from NO2 testing
- Cleaning guidance for people with asthma -- see the MA Asthma Action Partnerships's Safety Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting
- Face mask guidance for people with asthma - Steps You Can Take to Get Used to Wearing a Mask

Pioneer Valley Asthma Coalition meeting
Thursday, May 28, 4-5 pm
https://zoom.us/j/4137397739

COVID Housing and Unemployment Questions Answered

On May 6, the Springfield Healthy Homes Collaborative (SHHC) and Arise for Social Justice held a Facebook Live Event on Housing and Health: What You Need to Know During COVID-19. Their guest speakers were Jane Edmonstone and Claudia Quintero from Community Legal Aid presenting and addressing questions on everything from evictions on subsidized or private housing to unemployment.

Focus Springfield hosted the event and you can watch the recording, available in English and Spanish at http://focusspringfield.com/housing/
No Menthol in Massachusetts starting on June 1

Starting June 1, 2020, flavored tobacco, including menthol cigarettes like Kool, Newport and menthol Pall Mall, will no longer be sold in places like convenience stores and gas stations in Massachusetts.

Last fall, the Fight All Flavors campaign and many supporting partners worked to build grassroots understanding of and support for a proposed restriction on the sale of flavored tobacco with an explicit focus on building youth leadership and calling out the tobacco and vaping industries’ targeting of menthol in communities of color.

Please join Fight All Flavors for a webinar on Thursday, May 21, 2020 at 4PM EST to learn more about our new campaign – No Menthol. Know Why. – and how you can help spread the word in your community about the new law. Click HERE to register.

Are you impacted by high pollen counts and allergies?

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America ranks the worst U.S. cities to live in for people with spring allergies every year. This year, the Springfield metropolitan area which includes Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin counties, is third out of the 100 most-populated metropolitan areas counted where people are most affected by allergies.

They not only look at pollen counts, but how high the use of allergy medications is, and how many local board-certified allergists there are.

Safety Guidance for Cleaning & Disinfecting for COVID-19
Asthma may be triggered by cleaning products so it is important to make sure to follow safe cleaning guidance. In addition, calls to US poison centers about cleaner and disinfectant exposures have increased by 20% recently.

Check out guidance from the Massachusetts Asthma Action Partnership, its partners and the CDC:

- MAAP Safety Guidance for Cleaning & Disinfecting for COVID-19
- MA Coalition for Occupational Safety & Health: COVID-19 Toolkit for Essential Workers
- Boston Public Health Commission: Cleaning & Disinfecting to Prevent COVID-19
- City of Worcester: Guidance for Property Managers, Contractors, and Realtors
- CDC Reopening Cleaning & Disinfecting Guidance
- COVID-19: Safely Clean & Disinfect by the Toxics Use Reduction Institute
  - Effective and Safer Household Disinfecting Products
  - Safer Disinfectant Use During COVID-19 Infographic

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**Lung Health & COVID-19 FAQ**

American Lung Association's Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rizzo answered questions during their "COVID-19 and Chronic Lung Disease: What You Need to Know" webinars held in March and April 2020.

- Lung Health & COVID-19 FAQ
- Listen to recorded webinars [here](#).
- Have a question not addressed in the FAQ? Contact ALA's Lung HelpLine at 1-800-LUNGUSA for one-on-one support, or [submit your question online](#).
- Learn about the ALA COVID-19 action initiative
- [Steps You Can Take to Get Used to Wearing a Mask](#)

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**Coronavirus (COVID-19): What People With Asthma Need to Know**

Learn more about the risks and how to protect yourself with this [guidance from AAFA](#).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>Coronavirus(^\text{a}) (COVID-19)</th>
<th>Cold (usual)</th>
<th>Flu (usual)</th>
<th>Seasonal Allergies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length of symptoms</td>
<td>7-25 days</td>
<td>Less than 14 days</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td>Several weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>Common (usually dry)</td>
<td>Common (Mild)</td>
<td>Common (usually dry)</td>
<td>Rare (usually dry unless it triggers asthma)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortness of breath</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No(^*)</td>
<td>No(^*)</td>
<td>No(^*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sneezing</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runny or stuffy nose</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore throat</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Sometimes (usually mild)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Short fever period</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling tired and weak</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headaches</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes (related to sinus pain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body aches and pains</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Sometimes for children</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chills/ repeated shaking</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of taste or smell</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{a}\)Information is still evolving. \(^*\)Allergies, colds and flu can all trigger asthma, which can lead to shortness of breath. COVID-19 is the only one associated with shortness of breath on its own.

Sources: Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.