

**KEY for "Our Community" Asthma Quiz**

1. **TRUE** - It is the number one cause of hospital admissions for children ages 1-9, and the number two cause of hospital admissions for children 10-14. A study by Glaxo-Welcome, a pharmaceutical firm, estimates that in a year there is one emergency room visit for each child with asthma in Miami-Dade County. The average number of lost days of school for an asthma attack is 7.3 lost days/attack.
2. **FALSE** - Miami-Dade county is estimated to have an asthma rate among children of 6%, whereas the state of Florida is estimated to have a rate of 7%. Miami's prevailing winds are thought to keep levels of air pollution lower than what might be expected for a city of its size. However, even though the county's overall rate is lower, the differences in asthma rates between rich and poor, white, black and Hispanic are striking. See below.
3. **FALSE** - Death from asthma, though rare, is increasing. Between 1980 and 1993, the mortality rate for children from asthma has risen 78% according to the Centers for Disease Control.
4. **FALSE** - All these factors can trigger asthma attacks for certain individuals.
5. **FALSE** - Asthma is not a contagious or infectious lung disease (unlike tuberculosis). A tendency to develop asthma can be passed from parents to children through their genes, and exposures in the home environment can do much to worsen or minimize asthma. See below.
6. Many things can be done in the home to reduce asthma attacks including:
  - ❖ Eliminate smoking in the home.
  - ❖ Dust frequently (when asthma sufferers are not around).
  - ❖ Reduce dust gathering items like books, magazines, stuffed animals.
  - ❖ Run the fan or AC with a good filter in place.
  - ❖ Keep indoor humidity low.
  - ❖ Keep pets out of bedrooms, shampoo pets often.
  - ❖ Enclose mattresses, pillows to control dust mites.
7. **TRUE** - Once someone has asthma they may not have symptoms for long periods. However, adult asthma is a chronic condition and the lungs show evidence of over-reactivity and obstruction even in the absence of symptoms.
8. **TRUE** - The American Lung Association website is a good resource and provides estimates of asthma prevalence for major cities.

- 9. TRUE** - This is true, however the number of cases of true "childhood asthma" which subsides on its own around the age of four are only about 25% of diagnosed cases in children; even if the asthma goes away, it can return again or develop as an apparently new disease in adulthood. Parents should never count on asthma going away on its own. Active management by a doctor can prevent the illness from progressing.
- 10. FALSE** - Overuse of drugstore asthma medications can be deadly! The medicine can decrease the user's sensitivity to the medication over time, allowing the asthma to worsen without detection. Asthma sufferers should see a doctor for treatment and monitoring.
- 11. TRUE** – As in much of the US, asthma rates are higher for low income African-American and Hispanic children in Miami-Dade than for whites in the same county. Asthma is more prevalent among blacks, more severe in its presentation and less likely to be controlled with correct medications among black children. Hospitalization rates among African-American children ages 0- 4 are twice that for whites and three times that for white children for African-American children between the ages of 5-14.
- 12. TRUE** - It is estimated that between 15 and 25% of children in the highest risk areas of Miami-Dade are suffering from symptoms of undiagnosed and uncontrolled asthma.
- 13. FALSE** - Because Miami is a tropical city, Miami has *more* than the usual problems with mold and pollen. While pollen is primarily a problem in spring and summer in most parts of the US, Miami has trees and flowers blooming all year long. Also, the heavy rains associated with Miami summers can lead to prolonged periods of wet, soggy vegetation. This is also a problem for people whose roofs or walls leak. Miami has a large sector of very low quality and old housing. Low income tenants or owners of such housing might have difficulty getting leaks fixed or finding better living arrangements.
- 14. Triggers that may potentially worsen asthma are:**
- ❖ Smoke (from fire, cigarettes, incense, etc.)
  - ❖ Changes in temperature, humidity
  - ❖ Extreme cold or heat
  - ❖ Pet hair, dander
  - ❖ Dust, dust mites
  - ❖ FoodAir pollution

- ❖ Mold
- ❖ Stress, excitement
- ❖ Exercise

15. **FALSE** - Diet has no clear connection with asthma, except in cases where people have a specific food allergy. Low-income families often have difficulty getting access to health care. They can have trouble getting transportation and missing work to take a child to a health care center. Getting insurance through government programs can be frustrating and take a long time. Because low-income families often don't get routine or preventive care, they may over-use the Emergency Room, which is, in turn, expensive, stressful and not the best environment for treating a long-term chronic condition such as asthma