

## Announcement

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**Subject:** EPA-FUNDED STUDY SHOWS EDUCATING FAMILIES ABOUT ASTHMA REDUCES ATTACKS  
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### U.S. Environmental Protection Agency • Region 2

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## EPA-funded Study Shows Educating Families about Asthma Reduces Attacks

**For Immediate Release:** Thursday, May 27, 2004

(#04073) New York, N.Y. -- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today announced the results of a study conclusively demonstrating that a combination of clinical and home interventions reduces the frequency and severity of asthma attacks. The study was conducted over three years by the Clinical Directors Network (CDN) and funded by EPA, the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP).

"This study shows that families can take practical steps to reduce environmental triggers that lead to many asthma attacks and trips to the emergency room," said EPA Regional Administrator Jane M. Kenny. "It is vital that we take a holistic approach to controlling these triggers, including through diet and exercise."

CDN looked at pediatric patients in minority communities through sixteen HRSA-funded health clinics. EPA provided \$540,000 for the study. The NJDEP and the HRSA each provided \$50,000. The centers are located in Brooklyn, The Bronx, Queens and Manhattan in New York; Camden and Bridgeton in New Jersey; St. Croix, Virgin Islands; Mayaguez, Santurce, Patillas and Castaner in Puerto Rico; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Kansas City, Missouri.

CDN evaluated the effectiveness of asthma interventions in both private homes and clinics. During an intervention, a trained individual educates asthma sufferers and their families about what they can do to control asthma triggers. They provide information about indoor air triggers including second-hand smoke, dust mites, pets, mold, cockroaches and pesticides, as well as the proper use of medications. The study provided specific clinical and environmental tools to help manage patients more effectively and reduce the number of missed school days, emergency room visits and urgent care visits for children battling asthma.

CDN determined that the majority of asthma patients were overweight and many had almost no physical activity. The study demonstrated, however, that children who engaged in more than 10 hours per week of exercise had a reduced amount of hospital visits. Results also showed that using mattress and pillow covers significantly lowered emergency room visits and hospitalizations. Emergency room visits also decreased when cleaning practices such as dusting in front of asthmatic children were changed. Getting rid of cockroach problems also had a major positive impact.

Followup calls made after the interventions revealed that participants continued to maintain the use of pest-control products and mattress covers that they received through the interventions. Parents also remained aware of environmental risk factors, such as cockroaches and dust mites.

Further detailed analysis showed that residents of Puerto Rico, specifically in rural areas, had less instances of emergency room visits after the interventions. More information can be found on the Web at [www.CDNetwork.org](http://www.CDNetwork.org).

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