



Lung Disease

Asthma

Berrien County has a greater percent of people diagnosed with Asthma than Michigan and the U.S. In Berrien, asthma is a very common reason for preventable hospitalizations.

Asthma is a treatable lung disease, caused by increased sensi-

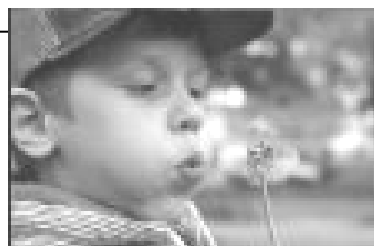
tivity of the airways to triggers. It is a chronic condition with episodes that can be life-threatening if not managed.

Asthma breathing problems usually happen in episodes but the inflammation underlying asthma is continuous. An asthma episode results in narrowed airways.



Episodes include: swelling of the airway lining, tightening of the muscle, and increased secretion of mucus in the airway. The narrowed airway is responsible for the difficulty in breathing with the familiar "wheeze". Triggers include viral infections, allergies, irritating gases and particles in the air, colds, pollen, mold, animal dander, feathers, dust, food, cigarette smoke, cockroaches, vigorous exercise, cold air or sudden temperature change, and excitement or stress.

Each person reacts differently. Asthma medications help reduce underlying inflammation or swelling in the airways and relieve or prevent airway narrowing. Control of inflammation should lead to reduction in airway sensitivity and help prevent airway obstruction.



grow into normal lung tissue. Lumps of cancer cells (tumors) form and disturb the healthy lung making it difficult to work properly.

RSV

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is the most common cause of severe lower respiratory tract infection in children. RSV is a swelling of the small airways usually occurring during the winter. It is spread through close contact with infected persons or contact with contaminated surfaces or objects, when infectious material comes in contact with the eyes, mouth or nose. RSV begins with fever, runny nose, cough and sometimes wheezing.

Common Lung Diseases: COPD

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) refers to two lung diseases, chronic bronchitis and emphysema, which block airflow and interfere with normal breathing. Smoking is the primary risk factor for COPD. Other risk factors include air pollution, second-hand smoke, history of respiratory infections and heredity.

Chronic Bronchitis

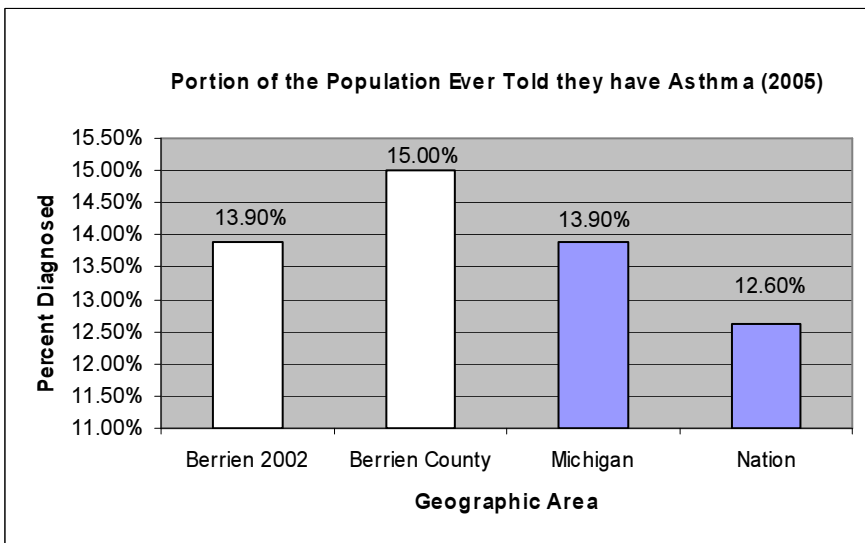
Chronic Bronchitis is the inflammation and scarring of the lining of the bronchial tubes in the lungs. When the tubes are inflamed and/or infected, less air is able to flow to and from the lungs and a heavy mucus or phlegm is coughed up. Once the bronchial tubes have been irritated for a long time, excessive mucus is produced constantly, the lining of the bronchial tubes thickens, an irritating cough develops, and air flow is blocked.

Tuberculosis (TB)

TB is an airborne infection caused by bacteria that primarily affects the lungs. TB can be spread by someone who is already infected, through coughing, sneezing, laughing or singing. Symptoms include prolonged coughing (sometimes coughing up blood), night sweats, weight loss, loss of appetite, fever, chills and tiredness. There is a difference between being infected with TB and having active TB disease. Someone who is infected with TB has the TB germs, or bacteria, in their body. TB can be cured but you must take prescribed medication, usually for 6 to 9 months.

Lung Cancer

Lung cancer is an uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells in one or both the lungs. While normal lung tissue cells reproduce into healthy lung tissue, in cancer abnormal cells reproduce rapidly and fail to



Berrien County Health

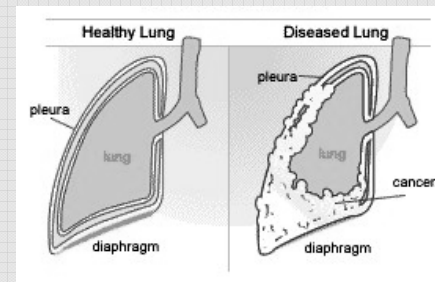
Department:
Preventing Disease,
Prolonging Life and
Protecting the
Health of the
Community.



November is Breathe Easy Month

November is Breathe Easy month, so the Health Department will provide information about Lung Disease, Radon, the Great American Smoke Out, and World AIDS Day. For more information about any of these topics, **please call the health department at 926-7121.**

- In 2003 asthma caused an estimated 12.8 million lost school days in children. 20 million Americans currently have asthma. Of these 4 million children and 7 million Adults had an asthma attack. (ALA)
- In 2003 new cases of TB in the United States was 14,874 this is the lowest rate since 1953. (ALA)
- In 2003, 10.7 million U.S. adults were estimated to have COPD.
- It is estimated that 87 percent lung cancer cases are caused by smoking. Other causes include radon, asbestos and air pollution.
- Approximately 80-90% of COPD deaths are caused by smoking.
- An estimated 1 million people worldwide die from lung cancer annually. It is the most common diagnosed cancer. Over 3 million people have lung cancer, the majority residing in developed countries.



For more information, call the health department at:

926-7121

The Berrien County Health Department has five locations to serve you:

Benton Harbor

769 Pipestone
P.O. Box 706
926-7121

M-139 Office
2106 S. M-139
927-5623

School Based
870 Colfax Ave
925-4500

Niles

1205 N. Front St.
684-2800

Three Oaks

21 N. Elm
756-2008

Or visit us on the web at www.berriencohlthdept.org

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