The Importance of Raising Awareness for Asthma

by ANGLEA FINLAY

Raising Awareness for Asthma

Anyone who suffers from asthma knows that it can be an uncomfortable and difficult condition to manage, but it can also be dangerous. Too many people equate asthma with mild breathing discomfort, which minimizes the importance of good management and advancement in research. By raising awareness and adding your voice to the asthma advocacy movement, you can help ensure a better quality of life for all asthma sufferers, and reduce the amount of unnecessary asthma-related emergencies and fatalities.

Why Raise Awareness for Asthma?

Asthma is not a rare disease – nearly 25 million Americans live with the condition, and many must take measures to prevent serious breathing complications. But even though one in ten people are asthmatic, the condition continues to cause a tremendous amount of complications. Thousands of people miss school, miss work, are rushed to the emergency, and are admitted to the hospital every day, which suggests asthma management strategies are in need of more attention.

One voice may not seem like much, but you can join with thousands of others to increase asthma awareness, which will help to:

Advance medical research for asthma management

By advocating for better understanding and management of asthma, you can help to direct focus and attention to research and health initiatives. This can lead to targeted treatments that are more affordable for the average patient.

The more public awareness and fundraising for the cause, the more pressure to modernize programs, invest in research, and improve treatment options based on the latest scientific evidence. Asthma is a chronic and serious disease, and though many patients are able to control their symptoms, there is still a long way to go to improve the prognosis for every asthma sufferer.

Improve routine care

Statistics show that medical and self-care for asthma is shockingly inadequate: as Asthma UK reports, asthma kills three people each day, and half of all those deaths could have been avoided with better routine care. Prescription errors and doctor complacency are parts of the problem, but patients also fall short in their self-care and asthma monitoring.

Knowing the risks, daily responsibilities, and signs of distress will help patients and doctors manage asthma more effectively. But in order to reap those rewards, the medical community needs to reach a consensus about proper evaluation and treatment procedure, and every asthma sufferer must learn how to recognize complications and

use the right resources – like an asthma action plan – to protect their respiratory health.

Build a safer environment for sufferers

Asthma triggers are everywhere, and although each patient must do all they can to avoid potentially harmful situations, their friends, family, neighbours – even strangers – have a role to play, as well.

A lack of information about asthma attacks (and how to handle them) means many people could unknowingly make things worse by eating, handling, or exposing allergens or other dangerous substances. In other cases, not acting in time can mean the difference between an uncomfortable event and a life-threatening emergency. The better the public understands the complications of asthma, and how to help avoid them, the more likely asthma patients can avoid problems.

Next page: tips to help you spread the word.

Tips to help you spread the word

Talking with friends and family about the realities of asthma and asthma management is important, but you also have other resources to help you reach more people. If you don't know where to begin, look for groups and organizations that are already in motion, and find a way to contribute.

Participate in Asthma Awareness Month

May is National Asthma and Allergies Awareness Month, and it's a great opportunity to get involved with other asthma advocates in your community and across the nation. Join in the fundraising initiative with online tips and resources from the experts, and a web page to collect donations. If you really want to make a splash in your region, plan an event – gathering with like-minded people to achieve a noble goal is invigorating and a can give you a big confidence boost.

Join a support group

Whether you're living with asthma or learning to advocate for an asthmatic friend or family member, support groups can help you sort out your feelings, gain knowledge, and learn new ways to cope and communicate. Sharing stories is cathartic, but also enlightening: you may discover a new approach to communicating effectively with health care professionals, or a better way to convey the weight of your asthma concerns to those around you.

Spread your message on social media

Let your friends and followers know your thoughts on asthma awareness by posting a virtual badge or button from an asthma information website like the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, or add links to new and insightful news articles on asthma-related topics.

It can be difficult to share your thoughts without feeling pushy, but don't let that put you off your goal. Instead, gently appeal to the public desire for comfort and happiness. Asthma is more prevalent than ever before, and it touches more lives today than many people might imagine.

Conclusion

Connect your audience to the subject by showing how improvements in asthma management and treatment means a better life for everyone: less medical attention devoted to dealing with emergencies and more to research and scientific advancement, more productive workplaces, healthier schools, and less chance of someone you know and love succumbing to breathing problems. Don't expect sweeping changes to come overnight, but have confidence in your message and in your ability to make a difference.