

Asthma, a serious thing

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

Did you know one in six people in eastern Colorado has asthma?

Did you know that asthma affects a very large number of Colorado residents each year? It is the most common chronic illness among children.

Asthma causes people to have trouble breathing, and interferes with every aspect of life. People with asthma often miss work and school and live in fear of their next asthma attack. During an asthma attack, a person may struggle to catch their breath and often has coughing, severe chest tightness and panicky feelings. Many people with asthma also struggle with feelings of anxiety and sadness.

Every year, approximately 5,000 people are hospitalized in Colorado for asthma. Children under 5 are at greatest risk for developing asthma symptoms severe enough to require hospitalization. Counties in eastern Colorado have been hit especially hard. Hospitalization rates for asthma in Logan, Morgan, Lincoln, Kit Carson, Cheyenne, Otero, Prowers and Baca counties are among the highest in the state.

To help fight this epidemic, the High Plains Research Network has partnered with National Jewish to implement the Asthma Toolkits program in primary care practices across eastern Colorado. Asthma Toolkits provide physicians with up-to-date training and equipment to diagnose and treat asthma in the most effective way possible. Doctors also get Asthma Toolkits filled with helpful information and peak flow meters for their patients. Patients can also sign up for a telephone outreach program. This provides useful information about asthma and other free services. Be sure to talk to your doctor about any asthma symptoms and ask for your asthma toolkit.