Asthma is a lifelong disease that causes wheezing, breathing difficulty, inflam- mation and often causes coughing during sleep at night or early morning. Today, more than 25 million people in the U.S. have asthma. Annually, about 5.5 million people in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of people with asthma con- tinues to grow.

Asthma affects people from all backgrounds and commu- nities. It is more common and often severe among children, African Americans, Asian-Pacific Islanders.

Asthma is also more common and severe among adults living in lower income and urban communities. The racial and ethnic differences in asthma are shocking. For example, according to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health, African American children are at a half times more likely to have asthma than white children. African American children are also more likely to be hospitalized and four times as likely to die as white children. In Alle- n County, 16.6 per- cent of African Americans were diagnosed with asthma, compared with 8.9 percent of white people.

The reasons for racial dis- parities in asthma information cannot be explained by ge- netic factors. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America found that factors such as lack of resources and issues related to exposure to violence and stress may contribute to asthma.

Asthma adults and children living in urban communities are often exposed to poor pockets. Lack of knowledge or access medi- cations and access to asthma care (spe- cifically for African Americans and Latinos) from this research provides us with deeper understanding of social and environmental stressors that are stressful and that affect children with asthma. Interven- tions that are effective for African Americans and Hispanics are needed. Through these efforts, we hope to improve asthma and eliminate dis- parities.

New research aids in understanding role of social and environmental stressors in childhood asthma

Community members and primary care providers in the region have been involved in new research to assess the sensitivity of childhood asthma. Children with asthma, together with Michael Yonas, Yonas, an assistant professor of Family Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh, and other research participants worked together to create a tool for the early detection and control of childhood asthma. This new tool was developed by Jeanne Braddock, North Braddock and Chadwell, PA was among the first to test the tool. The Pittsburgh County primary care providers and school nurses and practitioners from the Publicn and Publicn Mountains school districts.

Each group has helped to provide important ideas about how stress affects children with asthma. For example, the "I Can Cope" asthma treatment or an education- al program has been developed and tested with the input of the "I Can Cope" study. The project is being implemented in several schools.

Most asthma treatments involve using medications to relieve inflammation and symptoms of asthma, which may include relieving asthma asthma medications and stress can make asthma treatment ineffective. Asthma is a lifelong disease that causes wheezing, breathing difficulty, inflammation and can cause premature deaths of people with asthma.

Asthma attacks are more likely to occur in people who are diet rich in allergens, irritants and tobacco smoke, pollution and allergens can lead to mini attacks. Exercise can cause an asthma attack. Asthma attacks are more likely to occur in people who are diet rich in allergens, irritants and tobacco smoke, pollution and allergens can lead to mini attacks.

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It’s important to talk to an asthma specialist to be sure you receive a proper diagnosis. Many people who think they have asthma do not. Many factors can be associated with the disease, including exercise, stress, allergies, and environmental factors. It is important to use medications properly, know your triggers and work to prevent asthma attacks. Remember, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, income or personal history, everyone can have asthma. If you or someone you know is concerned about asthma or wants to learn more about it, call 1-800-220-1990. Visit www.healthylungs.org or call 1-800-220-1990.

The University of Pittsburgh Asthma Institute is one of the few asthma centers in the nation that is dedicated to providing the highest level of care for adults and children with asthma, and bringing asthma awareness to the community.