

Caregiver's poor knowledge of asthma means longer hospital stay for child

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Asthma is a complex disease, and it can be a challenge to keep up with your child's medications and treatments. New research being presented at the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) Annual Scientific Meeting shows children of caregivers with poor asthma knowledge were four times more likely to have a prolonged hospital stay. A "prolonged" stay was defined as more than two days.

"We studied 72 children ages 2-17 who had been hospitalized with [asthma](#)," says allergist Deepti Deshpande, MD, MPH, ACAAI member and lead author on the study. "Their caregivers completed a questionnaire when their [child](#) was admitted, when they were discharged and again four to six weeks after discharge. If the [caregiver](#) had poor asthma knowledge when their child was admitted, the odds were four times greater that the child's length of hospital stay would be longer than two days. If caregiver asthma knowledge was good, the odds were strong that the child's hospital stay would be less than two days."

Asthma education during the [hospital stay](#) for children and their families included interactive material that covered general asthma knowledge as well as asthma triggers and ways to control them. During their child's stay, caregivers were given demonstrations on correct inhaler technique and learned how to use an asthma action plan.

"We focused on providing families with a better understanding of medications, their use, side effects and correct technique for use of devices to help improve use," says Dr. Deshpande. "After the [education program](#), caregivers showed an increase in their general asthma knowledge from admission, to four to six weeks after discharge. Additionally, at 4-6 weeks after discharge, 90 percent of caregivers were able to correctly name their child's rescue medicine and 73 percent were correctly able to name the controller medicines."

Many people aren't aware that allergists can work with you and your child to bring asthma under control and reduce symptoms. Allergists are specially trained to help you take control of your asthma, so you can live the life you want.

More information: Abstract Title: Caregiver Knowledge as a Predictor of Length of Stay in Children Hospitalized with Asthma Exacerbations

Provided by American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

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