USING A DUST MASK AND ASTHMA MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

ASSESSMENT

- Do not assume the child, parents of the child or caregiver fully understands the association between dust and asthma. Assess parent, child, caregiver's knowledge and current understanding prior to providing education.
- Assess if the person with asthma uses a mask while dusting.
- Assess the parent's or caregiver's understanding of the proper dusting technique to keep dust from rising into the air to a minimum.
- Assess frequency of dusting, especially in child's/asthmatics bedroom.
- Ask how dusting with a dust mask is going and if the parent or caregiver have any questions.

EDUCATIONAL MESSAGES

DUST MASKS

Keeping a clean home is very important to help reduce asthma, but it can cause a lot of dust in the air.   Dust in the air is easily breathed, and can linger in the air for approximately twenty minutes after cleaning. This is why it is recommended that people with asthma who live in the house not be present or in the same room when cleaning is being done. If the person with asthma cannot leave the house, or the person cleaning the house has asthma, it is important they use a properly fitted dust mask when cleaning the home. A good quality dust mask worn over the mouth and nose by the person doing the cleaning can reduce airway irritation caused by and make cleaning safer.   While the mask does not completely prevent breathing in dust, it can reduce the dust you breathe by at least 95%. You could still have an asthmatic attack from this amount of dust, but it will be less likely than if you do not use the mask.

HOW TO USE A MASK

It is important to use a quality mask that works. For example, inexpensive paper masks **do not** provide any protection from dust, but a close-fitting mask with exhalation valves can. The mask should fit snugly over the face and as much as possible if the asthmatic has a beard.   To know it fits snugly, exhalation should be felt through the button in the front-center of the mask and not around the edges of the mask. The mask should be used during cleaning and for about *twenty* minutes afterwards if the cleaner stays in the same rooms which were cleaned.

HOW TO FIT AND WEAR MASK

- Position the mask on your face so that silver band is placed over the bridge of your nose with wide part of mask around your chin.

- Place lower headband around head below your ears and fasten hook and catch together.

- Place upper headband around your head and above the ears and fasten.

- With your fingers tighten both straps and shape the silver nose band to your nose.

- *It is VERY important to have a tightly fitting mask.* To check the fit insert your little finger into hole in the bottom of the mask and push black rubber button to close exhale valve. Exhale normally while keeping this valve closed. Air should escape through the white filter in the front of the mask, NOT between your face and mask. If air escapes between face and mask readjust straps and nose band. Recheck seal every 10-15 minutes of use.

CARE OF THE MASK

- Clean mask after each week of use or if it appears dirty.
- Clean the white filter by brushing with a clean paint brush or old tooth brush.
- With a cloth dampened with water and a small amount of dish detergent wipe off plastic parts. Do not dampen or wipe the white filter.
- Wipe off any soap on plastic parts with a clean, damp cloth. Do not dampen white filter.
- Allow mask to air dry at room temperature.

STORAGE AND REPLACEMENT

- Store mask in a plastic bag. Do not crush, bend or distort mask.
- Replace the mask if breathing becomes difficult due to plugging of the white filter.
- This mask is only safe for dust. It does not protect against toxic fumes or when oxygen levels are low.

ACTIONS

CHW ACTIONS	CAREGIVER ACTIONS
• Demonstrate proper fitting of mask • Observe client fit mask	• Use mask when cleaning • Fit mask properly • Clean mask when dirty or after each week of use.

FOLLOW-UP VISITS

- Demonstrations as needed

SUPPLIES

None

EDUCATION HANDOUTS

None

REFERRALS

None