

Q&A

with dr. lisa sullivan

I was deeply saddened to learn that a Chicagoland youth recently died from asthma on the football field. It brings up the uncomfortable realization that, even in this day and age, asthma remains a life threatening disease. There is no cure, but there are many good ways to manage it and identify those at risk.

continue, the branches then begin to swell and fill with mucus. This process narrows the airway further and makes it increasingly hard to breathe. If left unchecked, this process will continue to progress until there is no room for air to move through the bronchial tubes, resulting in hypoxia (low oxygen) and eventually death.

What is asthma?

Simply put, asthma is a problem of 'twitchy' bronchial tubes. It can happen at any age, and generally, once it develops, it sticks around for awhile, waxing and waning over a period of years. To understand asthma, picture the respiratory system as an upside down tree.

What are the triggers for asthma?

Numerous triggers have been discovered for asthma, including: Infections; environmental allergy; exercise; fumes/odors; smoke/pollution; weather/barometric pressure changes; extremes in temperature and humidity levels; hormones; stress/anxiety/emotion; acid reflux; excess weight; med-

"If your student has asthma, watch for possible triggers, frequent inhaler use, and worsening at school or on the field."

The trachea (windpipe) and bronchial tubes comprise the trunk/branches and the alveoli (lung air sacs) are the leaves. The leaves (alveoli) in asthmatics are completely normal, at least to start. The tree branches (bronchial tubes) are not though. For reasons stemming from both nature and nurture, the inside of the tree branches tend to become twitchy or annoyed from a variety of triggers.

ications; foods; and food additives/preservatives. Individuals with asthma may have any variety, or all, of these triggers and will find they are additive when exposed to more than one. Knowing your triggers and being able to make educated decisions about your own risk on a given day is one of the first steps in managing asthma.

These triggers initially cause the branches to spasm and clamp down, narrowing the airway and causing symptoms of cough and shortness of breath and/or wheeze. As the spasms

Are there different types of asthma?
Yes. All asthmatics have a twitchy airway but differ in terms of severity, frequency of symptoms, and risk.

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Survivors, Supporters to Walk for Breast Cancer

Breast cancer survivors, caregivers, and supporters in Lake County will join tens of thousands of American Cancer Society volunteers in Illinois and across the U.S. at the *Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Lake County* walk on Sunday, October 18. This year, *Strides* celebrates its 10th anniversary in Illinois, and has raised more than \$8.4 million to save lives by helping people stay well and get well, by finding cures and by fighting back.

– unites the community to honor and celebrate breast cancer survivors, educate women about their cancer risk, and raise money to fund lifesaving research and support programs to further the progress against this disease.

The walk will debut this year at Independence Grove in Libertyville on Sunday, Oct. 18. Registration begins at 8am and the 5K walk starts at 9am. For more information, visit Makingstridesillinois.com or call 847-317-0025.

This non-competitive event – scheduled at nine locations throughout Illinois

Dusting is a good example of the futility of trying to put things right. As soon as you dust, the fact of your next dusting has already been established.

George Carlin

Family Network

Parents with children (newborn to age four) can meet others, relax, play, learn, and exchange ideas at the Family Network Parent/Child Center, located at 330 Laurel Avenue, Highland Park, Tuesday through Friday from 9:30-11:30am. Call Terry Beem at 847-433-0377 for more information, or visit Familynetworkcenter.org.

Benson, M.Ed., is a consultant at the Fussy Baby Network of Erikson Institute in Chicago, and has many years of experience with infants and their families.

You and Your Baby in the First Year of Life: Sleep, Soothing and Temperament – This free program for parents of infants will be held at 10am, Friday, Oct. 9. The speaker, Karen

The Parent Wellness Toolkit: Taking Care of Yourself So You Can Be There For Everyone Else – This free program for parents with young children will be held at 10am, Tuesday, Oct. 20. The speaker, Ruth Field, M.S.W., L.C.S.W., has many years of experience with young children, adolescents, and families.

Bernard Weinger JCC

300 Revere Drive, Northbrook. www.jcfs.org

Staying Motivated In A Tough Job Market – Thursdays, Oct. 1-22, 10:30am-12pm. Learn to understand the personal barriers to motivation, manage stress, and find support and encouragement to create an action plan that works for you. No fee. Contact Rosalie Greenberger, LCSW (JCFS) 224-625-2819 or Roberta Glick, LCPC, NCC (JVS), 847-412-4304.

tive skills to build friendships, enhance cooperation and conflict resolution, read social cues, and maintain peer relationships. Registration meetings are required to match children who are a good fit and have similar needs. \$250 series fee for 10-week group. Contact Melissa James, PsyD 847-412-4396.

Sibshops, for children ages 6-12 – Sunday, Oct. 18, 2:30-5:30pm. Sibshops offer brothers and sisters of children with special needs an opportunity to meet other siblings in a relaxed supportive and recreational setting. \$25 per Sibshop. Contact Tamara Besser, LCSW 773-467-3751.

Survive and Thrive: BRCA Previvors Learning Alliance – Monday, Oct. 19, 6:30-8pm. A new, professionally run, education and support group that will serve as a source of empowerment for women, and an opportunity to gather information and resources. No fee. Teresa Woodruff, MD, an oncology expert, will discuss cutting edge technology for preserving your fertility while reducing your cancer risk. A group discussion will follow. Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago (room location to be determined). Contact Rosalie Greenberger, LCSW, 224-625-2819.

Group Firefly – Tuesdays, Oct. 6- Dec. 8, 6:30-7:30pm. For boys ages 11-13 years of age who have been diagnosed with PDD, High-Functioning Autism, or Asperger's Disorder. This therapeutic play group focuses on developing effec-

Free Wheelchair Mission Fundraising Event



The Free Wheelchair Mission North Shore Chapter will host the 2nd Annual Magic of Mobility Event on Friday, Oct 16, 7:30pm at Pinstripes, 1150 Willow Road, Northbrook. Enjoy drinks, appetizers, and a silent auction. Tickets are \$59.20 each.

Free Wheelchair Mission has distributed over 369,000 wheelchairs throughout the world. Last year, the North Shore Chapter reaped over \$50,000 and allowed a local team to deliver two shipments of Wheelchairs to the people of Ecuador. This year's goal is to provide at least 1,000 more chairs to those waiting for mobility.

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