



## Do You Know Someone with Asthma?

### Chronic Asthma in Native Americans is Rising Fast

In Oregon, 44 percent of Native American/Alaskan Natives smoke commercial tobacco. It's not surprising that the documented cases of asthma are on the rise in Native adults and especially in children.

Asthma is a chronic breathing disorder and is the most common chronic health problem in children. Children with asthma have attacks of coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath that can be very serious.

The tiny air passages of the lungs become inflamed and fill with mucus, making breathing difficult. Many asthma attacks occur when children get respiratory infections, including infections caused by common cold viruses.

Attacks can be caused by many environmental factors and one proven factor is **exposure to secondhand smoke**. Secondhand smoke can cause children with asthma to suffer more frequent and severe asthma attacks when exposed. In addition, secondhand smoke may cause thousands of otherwise healthy children to develop asthma each year.

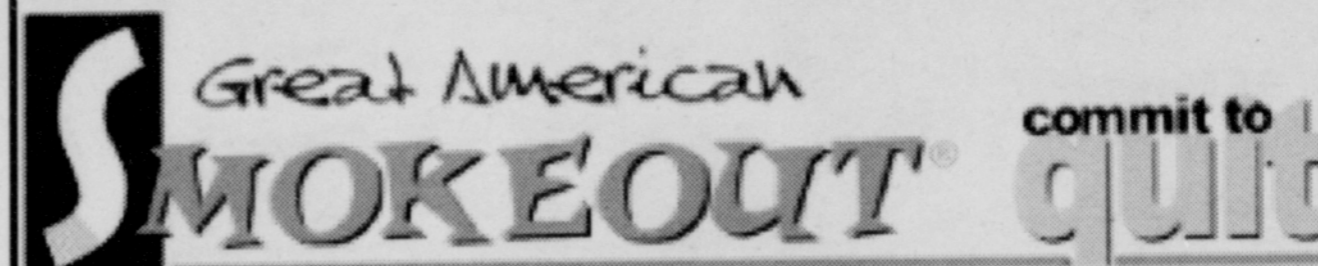
The **awesome** news, however, is that eliminating secondhand smoke in the home, car, and surroundings will greatly reduce the symptoms of asthma.

Although environmental tobacco smoke affects everyone, children are especially vulnerable because they are still growing and developing. Pound for pound, children eat, drink, and breathe **three times** as much as adults. Children are most likely exposed to secondhand smoke in their homes and cars.

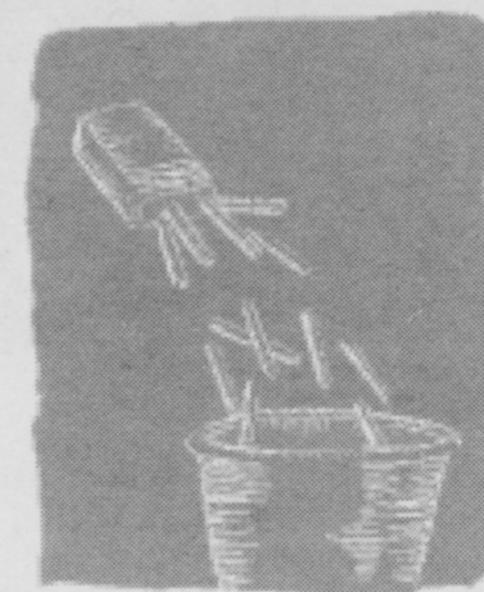
What can you do to help someone with asthma?

- Do not smoke in homes and cars whether a child is present or not.
- Clothing should be smoke-free when you're with a child who has asthma.
- Make sure to work with providers to have an asthma plan so they can breathe easy.
- Inform schools and day care providers about the child's asthma plan and what to do.

For more information, contact DeAnna Pearl at 541-444-9659 or 1-800-648-0449, ext. 1659, or visit the Web site [www.oshd.org/asthma](http://www.oshd.org/asthma).



Honor the gift of tobacco for one day on  
Nov. 18, 2004



Get Quit Kits from the Siletz Community  
Health Clinic or call the Oregon Quit  
Line at 1-800-270-7867.



SCHC Tobacco Prevention and Education  
DeAnna Pearl, TPEP Coordinator  
541-444-9659 or 1-800-648-0449

## Toothtalk

by Teri (the tooth fairy) Coddington, RDH

### Holiday Tooth Decay

November is upon us as we enter the festival season. Little ones will gobble up their Halloween candy only to have more Thanksgiving and Christmas treats.

Tooth decay occurs when your teeth are frequently exposed to foods containing carbohydrates (starches and sugars) like **soda pop**, candy, ice cream, milk, cakes, fruit, vegetables, and juices.

Natural bacteria live in your mouth and form plaque that interacts with deposits left on your teeth from sugary and starchy foods to produce acids. These acids damage tooth enamel over time by dissolving, or demineralizing, the mineral structure of teeth, producing tooth decay and weakening the teeth.

The acids formed by plaque can be counteracted by simple saliva in your mouth, which acts as a buffer and remineralizing agent. Chewing sugarless gum to stimulate your flow of saliva helps, but the best way to prevent decay is to brush with fluoridated toothpaste two to three times a day and floss regularly.

Because we all carry bacteria in our mouths, everyone is at risk for cavities. Those with a diet high in carbohydrates and sugary foods and those who live in communities without fluoridated water are likely candidates for cavities.

Teeth with large fillings and crowns also have a higher chance of developing tooth decay. Children and senior

citizens are the two groups at highest risk for cavities.

You can help protect your and your loved ones' teeth by stopping or reducing the intake of soda pop or sweets, drinking fruit juice instead of fruit punch, eating unsweetened cereal, and always brushing your teeth after eating. At minimum, rinse your mouth with water immediately after eating and brush when you have an opportunity.

If your children want to snack on candy or other holiday treats, have them sit down and eat the snack at one time, then have them brush their teeth. Don't allow them to snack on sweets or drink soda pop all day long.

Our bodies need real food. Any kind of real fruit juice is better than artificially flavored drinks. Frozen cans of concentrated juice are cheaper and just as good as canned real fruit juices. Real fruit juice does contain sugar, but in the form of fructose, a more natural form of sugar than table sugar.

The amount of sugar we eat adds up. Not only can too much sugar cause tooth decay, excess sugar consumption also can cause our bodies to become out of balance, increase our risk of developing diabetes, and cause hyperactivity in children. Eating and drinking less sugar makes us feel better, keeps our teeth strong, and keeps our bodies healthy.