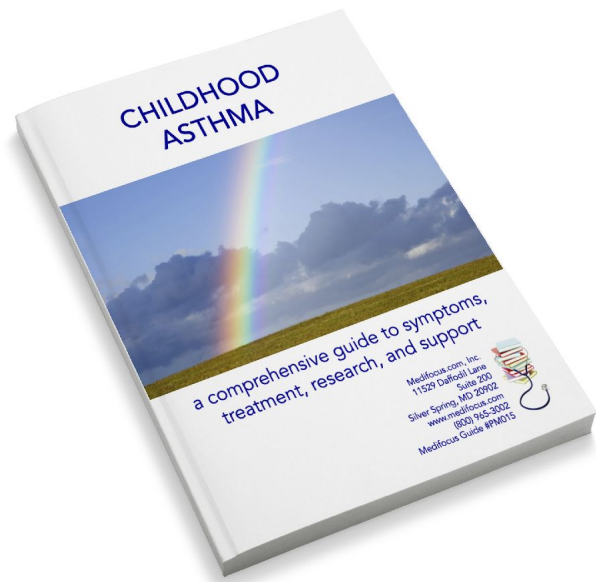


Preview of the Medifocus Guidebook on: Childhood Asthma

Updated November 4, 2009



This document is only a SHORT PREVIEW of the **Medifocus Guidebook on Childhood Asthma**. It is intended primarily to give you a general overview of the **format and structure** of the Guidebook as well as select pages from each major Guidebook section listed in the Table of Contents.

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1 - Background Information

Introduction

Chronic or life-threatening illnesses can have a devastating impact on both the patient and the family. In today's new world of medicine, many consumers have come to realize that they are the ones who are primarily responsible for their own health care as well as for the health care of their loved ones.

When facing a chronic or life-threatening illness, you need to become an educated consumer in order to make an informed health care decision. Essentially that means finding out everything about the illness - the treatment options, the doctors, and the hospitals - so that you can become an educated health care consumer and make the tough decisions. In the past, consumers would go to a library and read everything available about a particular illness or medical condition. In today's world, many turn to the Internet for their medical information needs.

The first sites visited are usually the well known health "portals" or disease organizations and support groups which contain a general overview of the condition for the layperson. That's a good start but soon all of the basic information is exhausted and the need for more advanced information still exists. What are the latest "cutting-edge" treatment options? What are the results of the most up-to-date clinical trials? Who are the most notable experts? Where are the top-ranked medical institutions and hospitals?

The best source for authoritative medical information in the United States is the National Library of Medicine's medical database called PubMed®, that indexes citations and abstracts (brief summaries) of over 7 million articles from more than 3,800 medical journals published worldwide. PubMed® was developed for medical professionals and is the primary source utilized by health care providers for keeping up with the latest advances in clinical medicine.

A typical PubMed® search for a specific disease or condition, however, usually retrieves hundreds or even thousands of "hits" of journal article citations. That's an avalanche of information that needs to be evaluated and transformed into truly useful knowledge. What are the most relevant journal articles? Which ones apply to your specific situation? Which articles are considered to be the most authoritative - the ones your physician would rely on in making clinical decisions? This is where *Medifocus.com* provides an effective solution.

Medifocus.com has developed an extensive library of *MediFocus Guidebooks* covering a wide spectrum of chronic and life threatening diseases. Each *MediFocus Guidebook* is a

high quality, up- to-date digest of "professional-level" medical information consisting of the most relevant citations and abstracts of journal articles published in authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This information represents the latest advances known to modern medicine for the treatment and management of the condition, including published results from clinical trials. Each *Guidebook* also includes a valuable index of leading authors and medical institutions as well as a directory of disease organizations and support groups. *MediFocus Guidebooks* are reviewed, revised and updated every 4-months to ensure that you receive the latest and most up-to-date information about the specific condition.

About Your MediFocus Guidebook

Introduction

Your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a valuable resource that represents a comprehensive synthesis of the most up-to-date, advanced medical information published about the condition in well-respected, trustworthy medical journals. It is the same type of professional-level information used by physicians and other health-care professionals to keep abreast of the latest developments in biomedical research and clinical medicine. The *Guidebook* is intended for patients who have a need for more advanced, in-depth medical information than is generally available to consumers from a variety of other resources. The primary goal of a *MediFocus Guidebook* is to educate patients and their families about their treatment options so that they can make informed health-care decisions and become active participants in the medical decision making process.

The *Guidebook* production process involves a team of professionals with expertise in diverse areas including experienced medical database researchers and practicing physicians who serve as members of the *Medifocus.com* Medical Advisory Board (MAB). This team approach to the development and production of the *MediFocus Guidebooks* is designed to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and clinical relevance of the information. The *Guidebook* is intended to serve as a basis for more meaningful discussions between patients and their health-care providers in a joint effort to seek the most appropriate course of treatment for the disease.

Guidebook Organization and Content

Section 1 - Background Information

This section provides detailed information about the organization and content of the *Guidebook* including tips and suggestions for conducting additional research about the condition.

Section 2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* represents a detailed overview of the disease or condition specifically written from the patient's perspective. It is designed to satisfy the basic informational needs of consumers and their families who are confronted with the illness and are facing difficult choices. Important aspects which are addressed in "The Intelligent Patient" section include:

- The etiology or cause of the disease
- Signs and symptoms
- How the condition is diagnosed
- The current standard of care for the disease

- Treatment options
- New developments
- Important questions to ask your health care provider

Section 3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

This is a roadmap to important and up-to-date medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest developments and breakthroughs in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new clinical developments, and advances in research. To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles are grouped by specific categories. A typical *MediFocus Guidebook* usually contains one or more of the following article groupings:

- *Review Articles*: Articles included in this category are broad in scope and are intended to provide the reader with a detailed overview of the condition including such important aspects as its cause, diagnosis, treatment, and new advances.
- *General Interest Articles*: These articles are broad in scope and contain supplementary information about the condition that may be of interest to select groups of patients.
- *Drug Therapy*: Articles that provide information about the effectiveness of specific drugs or other biological agents for the treatment of the condition.
- *Surgical Therapy*: Articles that provide information about specific surgical treatments for the condition.
- *Clinical Trials*: Articles in this category summarize studies which compare the safety and efficacy of a new, experimental treatment modality to currently available standard treatments for the condition. In many cases, clinical trials represent the latest advances in the field and may be considered as being on the "cutting edge" of medicine. Some of these experimental treatments may have already been incorporated into clinical practice.

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Article title
- Author Name(s)
- Institution where the study was done

- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)
- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the corresponding URL address that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of a *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the article abstracts online by entering the individual URL address for a particular article into your web browser.

Section 4 - Centers of Research

We've compiled a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of the specific medical condition. The "Centers of Research" directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of the condition.

Inclusion of the names of specific doctors, researchers, hospitals, medical centers, or research institutions in this *Guidebook* does not imply endorsement by Medifocus.com, Inc. or any of its affiliates. Consumers are encouraged to conduct additional research to identify health-care professionals, hospitals, and medical institutions with expertise in providing specific medical advice, guidance, and treatment for this condition.

Section 5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver high-level, quality medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it. This section of your *Guidebook* offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Section 6 - Directory of Organizations

This section of your *Guidebook* is a directory of select disease organizations and support groups that are in the business of helping patients and their families by providing access to information, resources, and services. Many of these organizations can answer your questions, enable you to network with other patients, and help you find a doctor in your geographical area who specializes in managing your condition.

2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

CHILDHOOD ASTHMA

Introduction

When a person breathes, air enters the lungs through progressively smaller airways called *bronchioles*. There are millions of these bronchioles that lead to microscopic sacs called *alveoli*. It is in the alveoli that oxygen and carbon dioxide are exchanged.

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory condition in which the airways undergo changes when stimulated by allergens or other environmental triggers that causes an inability to breathe properly. The word "asthma" was derived from an ancient Greek word meaning panting or breathlessness. Other terms used are reactive airways disease and reversible airways disease. There is inflammation, hyperresponsiveness and at least partial obstruction of the airways that cause both short and long-term symptoms. There is also excessive production of mucous.

The heightened responsiveness of asthmatic airways causes reactions to stimuli that trigger little or no change in the airways of normal subjects. The cause of this hyperresponsiveness is not clearly understood. There is some evidence that chronic inflammation may play a role.

Premature closing of small airways causes reduced ability to expel air, eventually leading to air trapping and lung over-inflation. This can cause permanent changes in the anatomy of the chest wall (the so-called "barrel chest"). Young children are especially at risk for these long-term consequences because of ongoing development of the rib cage.

Facts about Childhood Asthma

It has been estimated that in the United States, about 5% of the population age 18 or younger, or about 5 million people, suffer with asthma. Childhood asthma is a major health care concern as evidenced by the following facts:

- Asthma is the most common chronic condition in children younger than 18 years of age.
- Children younger than 18 not only represent about one-third of all asthmatics, but the prevalence in this age group is increasing much faster than in adults.
- Until the age of 15, asthma is twice as likely to affect boys than girls. After the age of 15, asthma is more prevalent in girls.
- The overall costs associated with the treatment of childhood asthma more than doubled from \$6 billion in 1990 to about \$13 billion in 2000.

- Asthma is the number one chronic condition causing children to miss school.
- Childhood asthma accounts for more than 10 million lost school days each year.
- It has been estimated that one out of six pediatric emergency room visits and at least 15% of pediatric hospitalizations is attributed directly to asthma.
- Despite major advances in treatment, the mortality rate from childhood asthma has nearly doubled since the 1980's.

What Causes Childhood Asthma?

The cause of asthma is multifactorial and includes both hereditary and environmental factors. Most cases of asthma are thought to be related to the presence of allergies, however not all persons with allergies have asthma and not all cases of asthma can be attributed to allergies.

Asthma Triggers

- Cold, dry air
- Exercise
- Tobacco smoke
- Fumes (paint, exhaust, etc.)
- Viral respiratory infections (syncytial virus, parainfluenza, rhinovirus, adenovirus, and influenza viruses)
- Environmental allergens such as house-dust mites, molds, and cockroach antigen

Genetic Factors

Because asthma tends to "run in families", researchers believe that some children may be genetically predisposed to developing asthma. It is likely that environmental allergens serve as a trigger for asthma in children who are genetically predisposed to developing the condition.

Asthma and GERD

Studies have shown that a large proportion (about 75%) of people with asthma, including children, also have gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), the cause of heartburn. The physiologic connection between these two conditions remains unclear. Theories being investigated include the possibility of "microaspiration" (inhalation) of very small amounts of gastric contents into the esophagus causing reflexive reaction of the airways. These patients typically have symptoms of asthma following an episode of heartburn or that are worse after eating or exercise, and do not obtain relief from asthma therapy alone.

Exercise-Induced Asthma

Many people have asthma that is triggered only by exercise, a condition known as *exercise-induced asthma* (EIA). Symptoms such as cough, chest tightness or pain, or wheezing usually develop after a brief period of vigorous exercise and resolve spontaneously within 30-60 minutes. Exercise-induced asthma is followed by a refractory period of 30-90 minutes, during

which further exercise is followed by a shorter, less severe asthmatic response.

In addition to the use of pharmacologic treatments administered shortly before the exercise, EIA can be managed by inducing a refractory period and selecting a climate condition (warm moist air, minimal pollen) and sport type (swimming, etc.) that are less likely to provoke EIA. A "warm-up period" before a sport event is an effective way of inducing the refractory period.

Risk Factors for Childhood Asthma

A *risk factor* is anything that increases a person's chances for developing a disease or condition. Risk factors for childhood asthma include:

- Family history of asthma or allergy
- Antibodies of the IgE class to inhaled allergens
- Gender - in the younger age groups (before age 12), asthma tends to affect boys more than girls
- Significant exposure in infancy to allergens (e.g., dust mites; pollen; moulds; cats; cockroaches)
- Exposure to maternal smoking in utero
- Environmental tobacco smoke exposure
- Wheezing episodes before age 3
- Frequent or severe viral respiratory infections in early childhood
- Low socioeconomic class
- Being born premature
- Low birth weight
- Damp environments
- Day care centers
- Obesity

The **Intelligent Patient Overview** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Childhood Asthma** also includes the following additional sections:

- **Diagnosis of Childhood Asthma**
- **Treatment Options for Childhood Asthma**
- **Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Childhood Asthma**

To Order the Complete **Guidebook on Childhood Asthma** [Click Here](#)
Or Call 800-965-3002 (USA) or 301-649-9300 (Outside USA)

3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

Introduction

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a comprehensive bibliography of important recent medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest advances in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new developments, and advances in research.

To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles in this *MediFocus Guidebook* are grouped in the following categories:

- Review Articles - 24 Articles
- General Interest Articles - 43 Articles
- Drug Therapy Articles - 4 Articles
- Clinical Trials Articles - 25 Articles

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Title of the article
- Name of the authors
- Institution where the study was done
- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)
- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the URI that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of the *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the abstracts online by entering the individual URI for a particular abstract into your computer's web browser.

Recent Literature: What Your Doctor Reads

Database: PubMed <September 2007 to November 2009>

Review Articles

1.

Culture-specific programs for children and adults from minority groups who have asthma.

Authors: Bailey EJ; Cates CJ; Kruske SG; Morris PS; Brown N; Chang AB
Institution: Child Health Division, Menzies School of Health Research, Darwin, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. emily_bailey@health.qld.gov.au
Journal: Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2009 Apr 15;(2):CD006580.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=PM015&ID=19370643>

2.

Quality improvement strategies for children with asthma: a systematic review.

Authors: Bravata DM; Gienger AL; Holty JE; Sundaram V; Khazeni N; Wise PH; McDonald KM; Owens DK
Institution: Center for Primary Care and Outcomes Research, Stanford, CA 94305-6019, USA. dbravata@stanford.edu
Journal: Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2009 Jun;163(6):572-81.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=PM015&ID=19487615>

3.

School-based asthma programs.

Authors: Bruzzese JM; Evans D; Kattan M
Institution: New York University Child Study Center, New York University School of Medicine, New York, NY, USA.
Journal: J Allergy Clin Immunol. 2009 Aug;124(2):195-200. Epub 2009 Jul 16.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=PM015&ID=19615728>

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4 - Centers of Research

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition. The *Centers of Research* directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of this disorder.

Use the *Centers of Research* directory to contact, consult, or network with leading experts in the field and to locate a hospital or medical center that can help you.

The following information is provided in the *Centers of Research* directory:

- **Geographic Location**

- United States: the information is divided by individual states listed in alphabetical order. Not all states may be included.
- Other Countries: information is presented for select countries worldwide listed in alphabetical order. Not all countries may be included.

- **Names of Authors**

- Select names of individual authors (doctors, researchers, or other health-care professionals) with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition, who have recently published articles in leading medical journals about the condition.
- E-mail addresses for individual authors, if listed on their specific publications, is also provided.

- **Institutional Affiliations**

- Next to each individual author's name is their **institutional affiliation** (hospital, medical center, or research institution) where the study was conducted as listed in their publication(s).
- In many cases, information about the specific **department** within the medical institution where the individual author was located at the time the study was conducted is also provided.

Centers of Research

United States

AZ - Arizona

Name of Author

Martinez FD

Institutional Affiliation

Arizona Respiratory Center, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, USA.

Stern DA

Arizona Respiratory Center, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, USA.

CA - California

Name of Author

Bravata DM

Institutional Affiliation

Center for Primary Care and Outcomes Research, Stanford, CA 94305-6019, USA. dbravata@stanford.edu

Coffman JM

Philip R Lee Institute for Health Policy Studies and Department of bFamily and Community Medicine, University of California, San Francisco, California 94118, USA. janet.coffman@ucsf.edu

Fena P

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Owens DK

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Yelin EH

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The **Centers of Research** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Childhood Asthma** includes the following sections:

- Centers of Research for relevant states in the United States
- Centers of Research listed for relevant countries outside the United States

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5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

Introduction

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver a high level and quality of medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it.

The process of finding and choosing a physician to manage your specific illness or condition is, in some respects, analogous to the process of making a decision about whether or not to invest in a particular stock or mutual fund. After all, you wouldn't invest your hard earned money in a stock or mutual fund without first doing exhaustive research about the stock or fund's past performance, current financial status, and projected future earnings. More than likely you would spend a considerable amount of time and energy doing your own research and consulting with your stock broker before making an informed decision about investing. The same general principle applies to the process of finding and choosing a physician. Although the process requires a considerable investment in terms of both time and energy, the potential payoff can be well worth it--after all, what can be more important than your health and well-being?

This section of your Guidebook offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Tips for Finding Physicians

Finding a highly qualified, competent, and compassionate physician to manage your specific illness or condition takes a lot of hard work and energy but is an investment that is well-worth the effort. It is important to keep in mind that you are not looking for just any general physician but rather for a physician who has expertise in the treatment and management of your specific illness or condition. Here are some suggestions for where you can turn to identify and locate physicians who specialize in managing your disorder:

- **Your Doctor** - Your family physician (family medicine or internal medicine specialist) is a good starting point for finding a physician who specializes in your illness. Chances are that your doctor already knows several specialists in your geographic area who specialize in your illness and can recommend several names to you. Your doctor can also provide you with information about their qualifications, training, and hospital affiliations.

The **Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Childhood Asthma** includes additional information that will assist you in locating a highly qualified and competent physician to manage your specific illness.

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6 - Directory of Organizations

Allergy & Asthma Network - Mothers of Asthmatics

2751 Prosperity Avenue Suite 150 Fairfax, VA 22031

800.878.4403

www.aanma.org

American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology

555 East Wells Street Suite 1100 Milwaukee, WI 53202

800.822.2762

info@aaaai.org

www.aaaai.org

American Association of Respiratory Care

9425 N. MacArthur Blvd. Suite 100 Irving, TX 75063

972.243.2272

info@aacrc.org

www.aarc.org

American College of Allergy Asthma and Immunology

85 West Algonquin Road Suite 550 Arlington Heights, IL 60005

mail@acaai.org

www.acaai.org

American Lung Association

61 Broadway 6th Floor New York, NY 10006

800.548.8252

www.lungusa.org

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

1233 20th Street NW Suite 402 Washington, DC 20036

800.727.8468

info@aafa.org

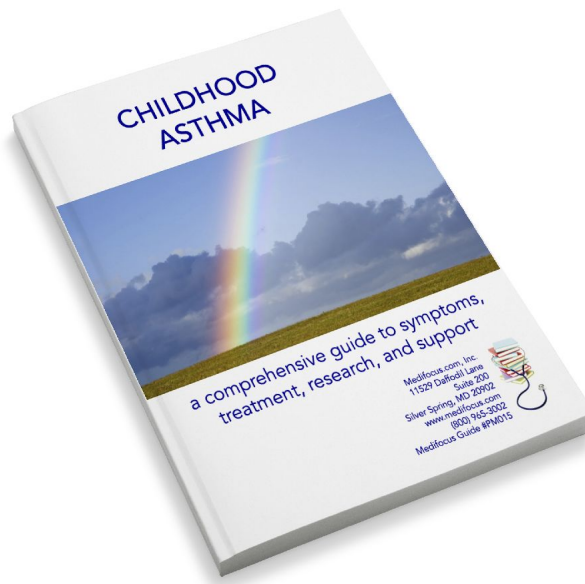
www.aafa.org

Asthma Clinical Research Network

www.acrn.org

The **Directory of Organizations** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Childhood Asthma** includes a list of selected disease organizations and support groups that are helping people diagnosed with Childhood Asthma.

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