**Asthma in Pregnancy & Children**

It's very important during pregnancy to maintain excellent control of your asthma because you're breathing for two. (or more!) I would encourage people to speak with their doctor once they know that they are pregnant.

Not treating asthma aggressively enough may do more harm to the baby than taking asthma medicine as directed. When it comes to asthma and pregnancy, about a third of women will get better, about a third will do about the same as they usually do, and about a third will be worse during their pregnancy. It is recommended to take asthma medicines as prescribed when pregnant. Because, it's very important to keep asthma symptoms under control so you can breathe well and the baby will get enough oxygen to grow properly.

There are many medications that are known to be safe in pregnancy and in breastfeeding, so we will use these medicines to keep asthma as stable as possible. It is also very important to avoid smoke and smoking when pregnant, as exposure to smoke can worsen your asthma and increase the risk for asthma and other lung problems in your baby. Don't smoke and try to avoid being around anyone who is smoking. If you are pregnant, talk to your doctor about your asthma.

There are some important things to know about children with asthma. Many children will develop asthma because it runs in their families, because they have environmental allergies, or because they had a bad virus in early childhood. Children with asthma will often wheeze and cough, especially if they are sick with a common cold. However, children may not always wheeze when they have asthma. A lot of times, a deep, hacking cough, sometimes to the point of throwing-up, can be the only symptom of asthma in kids.

Children’s lungs are still developing throughout childhood. Frequent nighttime coughing, due to asthma, can cause long-term damage to the lungs, so that they aren’t as healthy as they should be when they are older. Also, children with asthma may start limiting their exercise if they feel like it’s hard to breathe, which isn’t good for their overall health. Asthma can be controlled with medicine, so kids can stay active, which is important for all children.

Asthma medicines can also help treat or prevent asthma attacks. During an asthma attack, the lungs tighten down and it is difficult to get air. This situation can be a very dangerous emergency for children and can lead to hospitalization, or even death.

A lot of families have questions or concerns about giving asthma medicine to their child. However, because there is no cure for asthma, medicines are often needed to keep your child breathing well and prevent asthma attacks. Asthma medicines aren’t addictive, and they treat the ongoing problems in your child’s lungs that make it difficult to breathe. Your doctor can help you make the best choice for treating your child’s asthma. Fortunately, most children outgrow asthma. That said, it is important to control your child’s asthma until that happens, so that your child can breathe well, grow normally, and THRIVE!