Welcome to the Asthma Van!

We are happy that you brought your child (or children) to Mobile CARE Chicago's Asthma Van and would like to share some information with you about asthma.

WHAT IS ASTHMA?

Asthma is a lifelong, or chronic, breathing problem. It cannot be cured, or outgrown, but the symptoms can be controlled and prevented.

When a person has asthma their lungs are sensitive and may react to many things known as "*triggers'*.

Symptoms can be prevented by avoiding these triggers and there are medications to help control the symptoms.

We will help you determine your child's triggers by performing an allergy test at a future visit and discussing when your child seems to have more problems or asthma *"flares"*.

ASTHMA SYMPTOMS

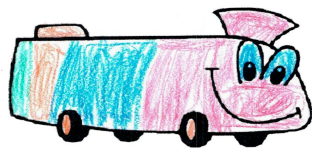Asthma is caused by swelling or inflammation of the airways in the lungs.

3 changes occur with asthma:
- Swelling of the airway
- Mucus forms within the airway
- Tightening of the muscle around the airway

These changes in the airway can cause the following symptoms:
- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Chest tightness

- Shortness of breath
- Feeling weak and tired
- Difficulty with running and activity

POTENTIAL ASTHMA TRIGGERS

ALLERGENS:

- Dust and dust mites
- Pollen from trees, grass or flowers

- Pets (dogs, cats, birds, rodents)
- Cockroaches

- Mold (indoor & outdoor)

IRRITANTS:

- Cigarette Smoke
- Air pollution

- Strong smells from perfumes, cleaning products, air freshners
- Aerosols like hair or bug spray

OTHER:

- Colds or the flu
- Strong emotions or stress

- Exercise
- Cold or humid air

MEDICATION

Two different types of inhalers/medication are used to help prevent and control asthma symptoms:

CONTROLLER	QUICK RELIEF OR RESCUE

- Improves and prevents airway swelling and tightness and reduces the mucus in the airways.
- Opens up the airways quickly by relaxing the muscle around the airway.

- Works over time and needs to be taken every day to work properly
- Works fast!

- Montelukast is also a controller
- Take during illnesses or before sports and activity as needed