### What is Asthma?
- Chronic condition of the airways
- Describe pathophysiology of asthma (inflammation, bronchospasm)
- Why does asthma make it so hard to breathe?

#### Early Symptoms or Warning Signs with Normal Activity
- Coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest pain/tightness

#### Late Symptoms or Warning Signs with Decreased Activity
- Worsening of coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest pain/tightness
- Breathing hard/fast, chest pulling in between ribs or neck area, nasal flaring, inability to talk in full sentences – symptoms differ in each person

### Asthma Triggers
- Cold & flu viruses
- Irritants (smoke from cigarette/cigars, fireplace, candles, incense)
- Allergens (dust mites, pet dander, cockroaches, molds, mildew, pollen)
- Environmental irritants (pollution, strong odors, cold air, chemical fumes)
- Emotions (crying, laughing)
- Exercise (when asthma is not controlled)

### Medications
- Quick-relief medicines (treat asthma symptoms & flare-ups) – relieve noisy asthma symptoms of coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath
  - Quick-relief bronchodilators
- Long-acting medicines (prevent asthma symptoms & flare-ups)
  - Take the same time each day, make it a daily routine
  - Long-acting bronchodilators (prevent noisy symptoms of coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath)
  - Inhaled anti-inflammatory corticosteroids (reduce & prevent the quiet asthma symptoms of airway inflammation)
  - Combination medications (reduce & prevent bronchospasm & inflammation)
  - Leukotriene modifiers manage allergic rhinitis and allergies, prevent asthma

### Asthma Action Plan
- Review sample plan used in your practice setting
- Discuss green, yellow & red zones & how to react to each zone
  - Concentrate discussion on yellow zone management strategies

### Devices
- Metered-dose inhaler (MDI)
- Dry powder inhaler (DPI)
- Spacer
- Valved holding chamber
- Mask
- Nebulizer with mask or mouthpiece (reusable or disposable)

### Set Goals
- A healthy lifestyle, preventing the need for emergency room or hospital visits
  - Trigger avoidance
  - Following Asthma Action Plan EVERY DAY
  - Take medications as prescribed (special care given to long-acting medications)
- No or few asthma symptoms disturbing sleep
- Follow up with healthcare provider, keep appointments, bring medications to appointments

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