CAN ASTHMA BE PREVENTED IN CHILDREN?
Asthma cannot be prevented. You can limit your child’s exposure to the things that cause asthma, especially in the first years of life, by:
- Not smoking in the house!
- Keeping your house clean.
- Keeping cats or dogs out of your child’s bedroom.
- By breastfeeding infants as long as possible.

Breast milk is healthier than powdered milk, and can delay or prevent asthma allergies.

ASTHMA CAN BE TREATED AND CONTROLLED
If you think your child has asthma, please consult your doctor. You control your asthma by staying away from the causes of asthma and also taking medicine as explained by your doctor. Take only medicine prescribed by your doctor to you.

For more information on the Internet about asthma, please visit:
- www.cdc.gov/asthma
- www.lungusa.com

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- The American Lung Association
- The Office of Minority Health
- The American Academy of Family Physicians
- New York State Department of Health

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WHAT IS ASTHMA?
Asthma is a disease that makes breathing difficult. There are tubes in our bodies that carry air to the lungs. Asthma causes these tubes to swell, making it difficult to breathe. There is no cure for asthma, but it can be treated with medicine and can sometimes be prevented.

ASTHMA IS DIFFERENT FROM Colds, THE FLU, BRONCHITIS, AND PNEUMONIA
Asthma is not caused by a virus and cannot spread from person to person. There is no cure for asthma, but there are medicines that can help prevent, or treat asthma attacks.

WHAT CAUSES ASTHMA?
The causes of Asthma are different from one person to another. The most common causes of asthma are:
- dust,
- pollen,
- pet hair,
- cockroaches,
- cold,
- air pollutants like tobacco smoke, car exhaust,
- cleaning products and perfumes
- illness,
- cold and windy weather, and
- rigorous or hard exercise (this does not mean people with asthma cannot exercise).

SIGNS OF ASTHMA
Asthma sometimes occurs suddenly making it difficult to breath. This is known as an attack. If your child has any of the following problems he or she may have asthma:
- wheezing when breathing,
- taking short breaths,
- feel tightness in the chest, or
- cough in the evening or morning.

During an asthma attack, the wind pipes become thick and filled with mucus. This makes it difficult to breathe.

The wind pipes in a person without asthma are relaxed and thin.

A wind pipe affected by asthma

A normal wind pipe

Source: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology