



AMERICAN RESPIRATORY ALLIANCE  
of WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

*We're All About Breathing*

## **Summer Heat Dangers for People with Asthma & COPD**

The summer heat and humidity can be dangerous for those living with chronic lung diseases such as asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). The Respiratory Alliance of Western Pennsylvania, located in Cranberry Township, provides lifesaving tips and resources for people suffering from lung disease.

Warm, humid, summer air can be particularly dangerous for people who suffer from asthma and COPD. The Respiratory Alliance reminds the community while lung diseases can be life threatening, if not treated properly; there are ways to manage it throughout these hot summer months.

Throughout the summer, as the heat and humidity increases, ozone levels increase which can trigger asthma attacks and make it difficult to breathe for people with COPD. When ozone levels are high, limit your time outside and avoid outdoor activities. The Respiratory Alliance recommends that people stay cool at home or in air conditioned locations. "If you don't have air conditioning in your home, go to a shopping mall, coffee shop or bookstore during the hottest times of the day to stay cool," says Executive Director Christine Weaver.

An estimated 282,400 children in Pennsylvania currently have asthma. In 2008, 9.3% of Pennsylvania adults were diagnosed with asthma. COPD is Pennsylvania's fourth leading cause of death and over 12 million people are currently diagnosed with COPD and another 12 million may have COPD but not know it. Daily in the United States:

- 10 people die from asthma
- 78,000 people miss school or work due to asthma
- 35,000 people have an asthma attack
- 4,600 people visit the emergency room due to asthma
- 1,200 people are admitted to the hospital due to asthma

The Respiratory Alliance is dedicated to the prevention and control of lung disease through education, training, direct services, research funding and advocacy. The organization also provides one-time medical assistance grants for medications to those patients who cannot afford oxygen and other lung disease maintenance drugs. For more information, contact the Respiratory Alliance at 724-772-1750 or click on [www.healthylungs.org](http://www.healthylungs.org). The Respiratory Alliance cares because they are *All About Breathing*®

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