

HOT TOPIC

MAY IS NATIONAL ASTHMA AWARENESS MONTH

HELP YOUR PATIENTS CONTROL THEIR DISEASE AND BREATHE EASIER

May is peak season for people who suffer with asthma. Asthma affects over 24 million people living in the United States, and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), treatment costs the nation an estimated \$56 billion each year.

Through education and awareness, you can help your patients manage their asthma by teaching them about the proper use of their medications and making them aware of the triggers in their home and community, such as second-hand smoke, pollen, and air pollution. Having an action plan in place that includes how and when to take medications — as well as when your patient should notify you of worsening symptoms — is essential to improving asthma control. Highmark West Virginia is dedicated to **best practices** to improve the health and quality of life for all of our members affected by asthma through effective control of the disease.

For more information, please visit the CDC at cdc.gov/asthma/world_asthma_day.htm or the United States Environmental Protection Agency at epa.gov/asthma.