Children with Asthma Often Suffer from GERD

Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) is easy to miss in children. Children with asthma are much more likely to have it than the general population.

Signs and symptoms of pediatric GERD may include:

- **Pain** - irritability, constant or sudden crying, "colic", back arching, abdominal pain above the belly button, chest pain, heartburn or burning sensation in the esophagus. (Rare - pain migrating to the shoulder/shoulder blade)
- **Vomiting** - frequent spitting-up or vomiting, frequent wet/sour burps, wet hicups, food coming part way up more than an hour after eating, spitting-up after six months of age. With 'invisible' or 'silent reflux' the food goes back down, not out of the mouth. (Rare - nausea, projectile vomiting)
- **Eating** - extreme pickiness about foods or textures, food intolerances, refusing food, eating only a few bites despite hunger, eating only when sleepy, gagging, choking, poor weight gain, weight loss. (Rare - excessive weight gain from 'comfort feeding."

- **Respiratory** - bad breath, constantly runny nose, frequent sore throat, upper respiratory infections, sinus infections, bronchitis, croup, wheezing, asthma, nighttime cough, nagging dry cough, throat clearing, noisy or labored breathing/stridor, hoarse or deep voice, vocal cord nodules. (Rare – pneumonia, aspiration, apnea, laryngospasm)
- **Miscellaneous** – headaches, poor sleep habits/ frequent waking, esophagitis, frequent ear infections or congestion, excessive salivation/drooling, pain-based aggression or clinging, needing to be held upright, intolerant of pressure on the stomach, tooth enamel erosion or 'moon craters' in teeth. (Rare - esophageal ulcers, strictures, peculiar torticollis-like neck arching, 'Sandifer's Syndrome,' Barrett’s Esophagus, variable heart rate/blood pressure, fainting)

*Each child has a different set of symptoms.

If you believe your child may have GERD, contact your pediatrician or a gastroenterologist. If you know your child has GERD, contact Pediatric/Adolescent Gastroesophageal Reflux (PAGER) Association for the support you need. PAGER Association is a parent-led, non-profit organization providing information and support to parents of children with GERD.

**PAGER Association offers:**

- telephone, web and e-mail support
- literature on GERD
- newsletter with practical information from parents and professionals
- lists of parent-developed home care techniques
- a research study of families that appear to have a genetic form of GERD

**Pediatric/Adolescent Gastroesophageal Reflux Association, Inc.**

PO Box 486 - Buckeystown, MD 21717-0486 - (301) 601-9541 Warm Line

gergroup@aol.com - http://www.reflux.org – Tax exemption ID# 52-1800883

Membership dues are now free - Donations are tax deductible and will allow us to help more parents

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_When a child has acid reflux, the whole family suffers_

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