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## **ECHO Health Programs Discussion Guide**

### **This DVD contains the following programs:**

- *Understand Asthma* (Asthma & Respiratory Diseases)
- *Get Fit, Eat Smart, and Be Well* (Nutrition and Exercise)
- *Put an End to Hidden Diabetes* (Diabetes Prevention and Control)

Each program lasts approximately 20 minutes and includes a pre-recorded section as well as a question and answer period in which a host interviews health experts from the community. All shows have subtitles in English. The diabetes program is also included in English on this DVD.

The DVD is available in Somali, Hmong, Khmer, Lao, Spanish and Vietnamese.

### **Discussion Guide**

The guide is designed for a facilitator to introduce the programs and lead a discussion. Facilitators do not need to be health experts; they can be outreach workers, group leaders, faith leaders or teachers. The DVD and discussion guide can be used in a variety of settings including classrooms, workshops, support groups and informal gatherings.

There are discussion questions for each program. We recommend you choose one topic for viewing at a time. Please allow 20 minutes for viewing and up to 30 minutes for discussion.

### **Learning Objectives**

This DVD and discussion guide are designed to increase awareness and understanding of diabetes, asthma and physical activity and nutrition. Each program provides up-to-date information and helpful tips for anyone to enhance their life and improve their health.

### **Preparing to Facilitate**

Before facilitating a session:

- Watch the program on your own
- Review the discussion guide questions
- Review the facilitator feedback form
- For additional resources on these topics in various languages, please visit [www.health.state.mm.us/echodvd](http://www.health.state.mm.us/echodvd).

### **Created in Partnership by:**

ECHO (Emergency and Community Healthy Outreach), a Minnesota collaborative of public health and safety ethnic advisory non-profit organizations dedicated to providing health and safety information to limited English proficiency populations.

Steps to a Healthier Saint Paul, Steps to a Healthier Minneapolis and the Diabetes Program at the Minnesota Department of Health. Steps is a national program funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The goal of Steps is to reduce the burden of diabetes, obesity and asthma through physical activity, healthy eating and tobacco prevention.



Steps to a Healthier Minneapolis and Steps to a Healthier St. Paul are part of Steps to a HealthierMN – a program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services focusing on the prevention of diabetes, obesity and asthma and addressing related risk factors – poor nutrition, physical inactivity and tobacco use and exposure. For more information about Steps to a HealthierMN, visit [www.stepstohealthiermn.org](http://www.stepstohealthiermn.org).



The Minnesota Diabetes Program is Minnesota's state-level public health resource for addressing diabetes prevention and control, and eliminating diabetes health disparities. The MDP has led efforts to reduce the impact of diabetes in Minnesota since 1980. The MDP is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the State of Minnesota. For more information, visit <http://www.health.state.mn.us/diabetes>.

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## *Understand Asthma* (Asthma & Respiratory Disease) Discussion Questions

*This program is designed to give simple information about asthma and how it can be controlled. Before showing the program, ask the audience to answer the following questions:*

- 1. What concerns do you have about asthma?**
- 2. Does anyone in your family have asthma? What is their life like?**
- 3. What do you hope this video will do for you?**

*Remind the audience that neither the video nor you can provide medical advice. Participants should consult with their own doctor or clinic if they have any worries or questions about these health topics. Proceed to show the program. Afterwards, lead a discussion by asking the following questions:*

**1. What is asthma and how does a person get it?**

Asthma is a chronic inflammation of the airways (swelling of the lining of the tiny tubes in the lungs); it is a disease that affects your lungs. It causes repeated episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness and nighttime or daytime coughing, called an asthma episode or attack. Not everyone has the same symptoms or frequency of asthma attacks. Some people have breathing problems after exercise. We don't know what causes asthma but it does tend to run in families.

**2. How do I know if a family member or friend has asthma?**

Anyone who experiences frequent daytime or nighttime coughing, shortness of breath or wheezing should be seen by a health care provider to determine if he/she has asthma. The health care provider will ask questions about your symptoms such as when you experience them and for how long, and the provider might test how well your lungs work by doing a test called spirometry. This test is simple and painless and requires you to breathe very hard and fast into a tube and a machine records how your lungs are working.

**3. What are the most common asthma triggers? How can they be avoided?**

Asthma triggers set off an asthma episode or attack. They are different for every person, but several things are common triggers such as viral infections like the common cold. The best way to avoid getting such infections is to wash your hands often during the day. Other common triggers are pollen and dust mites, which live wherever there is a warm, humid environment. Mold, cockroaches, animal dander (pet) and scented products such as perfume can also bring on asthma symptoms.

**4. How can you help someone who is having an asthma attack?**

People can die due to an asthma attack. Asthma symptoms can get worse very quickly. It is important to recognize the signs of an asthma attack and know what to do. Some signs of a life-threatening asthma episode are: the person's nails or the area around their lips turn blue or ashy colored; they may have difficulty speaking, walking or drinking liquids; they look like they are working hard to just to breathe; their muscles show in the neck and throat or the ribs can be seen on the sides of the chest as the muscles work hard to help their lungs pull air in; their nostrils open very wide (called flaring) to breathe; and they may be very frightened, confused or even lose consciousness. If you see a person with any of these symptoms, call 911 and get the person to a health care provider immediately.

**5. Should people with asthma limit their activities to avoid asthma symptoms?**

When asthma is well managed, people with asthma should be able to participate in all activities. By taking medication as a health care provider instructs and by avoiding triggers, people with asthma can be as active as anyone else. If someone is experiencing asthma symptoms such as a cough, shortness of breath, or wheezing, they should stop their activity and take their rescue medication. In addition, it is important for people with asthma to have a written Asthma Action Plan (AAP). An AAP helps patients manage their asthma and lists symptoms and medications to take when they are well and when they are having symptoms of an episode or attack.

*Ask the audience to think about (and share, if they are willing) three things they can do to help someone with asthma.*