

*Celebrating Women*

is proud to present:

# Managing and Understanding Asthma

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disease of the lungs. The most common symptoms are coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath. For children living with asthma, their quality of life is often compromised through missed opportunities, like not being able to go to school or keep up with their peers.

Dr. Alan Kaplan, the Chair of the Family Physician Airways Group of Canada, believes that people with asthma don't need to suffer if they manage the disease properly. The first step is to avoid the triggers and allergens: "such as

grass and mold and pollens and pets, and triggers such as occupational irritants and cigarette smoke would be examples."

The second step is using two therapies, "the acute reliever rescue therapy to open up the lungs acutely when you can't breathe, or the long term controller therapy that should be taken every day."



**Alan Kaplan**

MD CCFP (EM) FCFP  
Chair, Family Physician Airways  
Group of Canada

But managing asthma can be challenging. Doctor Kaplan says, "The commonest management issue I see in asthma is the idea that once I feel better, I don't need my medicine anymore. Asthma is a chronic inflammatory condition to the lungs that needs anti-inflammatory therapy in the form of a controller medication on a regular basis." Many parents are concerned about giving their children steroids on a daily basis. "That's because of the relationship between anabolic steroids used for muscle growth compared to inhaled steroids that are much safer when used for asthma therapy." Dr. Kaplan thinks parents should know that "there have been studies done checking for low to moderate doses of inhaled steroids in children. And the growth suppression they are concerned about, is really very unusual; the risk is very minimal."

According to Dr. Kaplan, "someone whose asthma is in control should be able to live a perfectly normal life." He recommends that you check with your doctor to ensure your child is on the medication and dose that is the safest and most effective for your child.

In *Managing and Understanding Asthma*, Dr. Alan Kaplan and the mother of a child living with asthma share their concerns about this disease and treatment options.

To view this insightful program, go to  
[www.celebratingwomentv.ca](http://www.celebratingwomentv.ca) & [www.healthandfamily.ca](http://www.healthandfamily.ca)

For more information about asthma and how to better manage it,  
speak to your doctor and visit [www.asthma.ca](http://www.asthma.ca).

*Celebrating Women*  
A tribute to women's health

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Hosted by  
Dr. Marla  
Shapiro





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This program is part of the Celebrating Women series.

Our goal is to help women make more informed choices when it comes to managing their health and the health of their families.

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