The Forum of International Respiratory Societies calls on healthcare providers worldwide to STOP for asthma!

Tuesday 7 May, 2019

On World Asthma Day, the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS) is recognising this year's theme: "STOP for asthma." FIRS calls on global healthcare providers to STOP for asthma and evaluate symptoms, test response to therapy, observe and assess, and finally proceed to adjust treatment.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 235 million people suffer from asthma, which can cause wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and coughing. Although asthma cannot be cured, it is possible to control the disease to reduce and prevent asthma attacks, also called episodes.

Asthma is the most common chronic disease among children. It is not just a public health problem for high income countries: it occurs in all countries regardless of level of development. Over 80 percent of asthma deaths occur in low and middle-income countries. Asthma is under-diagnosed and under-treated, creating a substantial burden to individuals and families and possibly restricting individuals' activities for a lifetime.

Asthma attacks cause adults to miss work and children to miss school. These dangerous and sometimes life-threatening episodes reduce the quality of life for people with asthma. The good news is that we can raise awareness about asthma and how it can be controlled. People with asthma can prevent asthma attacks by avoiding asthma triggers like tobacco smoke, mould, outdoor air pollution, and colds and flu. Asthma episodes can also be prevented by using inhaled corticosteroids and other prescribed daily long-term control medicines correctly.

Today is the 21st annual World Asthma Day, an event recognised each May to raise awareness of asthma worldwide. This World Asthma Day statement is put forth by GINA, on behalf of FIRS.

World Asthma Day was first held in 1998 and has grown each year to become one of the most important asthma events globally. On World Asthma Day, hundreds of awareness-raising activities will take place in countries all over the world.

Find out more about World Asthma Day here.

About the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS)

The Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS) is an organisation comprised of the world's leading international respiratory societies working together to improve lung health globally: American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST), American Thoracic Society (ATS), Asian Pacific Society of Respirology (APSR), Asociación Latino Americana De Tórax (ALAT), European Respiratory Society (ERS), International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases (The Union), Pan African Thoracic Society (PATS), Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA), and the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD).

The goal of FIRS is to unify and enhance efforts to improve lung health through the combined work of its more than 70,000 members globally.

For more information about FIRS please contact Lisa Roscoe lisa.roscoe@firsnet.org.

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