Developmental context may reveal explanations for poor asthma medication adherence among emerging adults.

Illness perceptions and treatment adherence among emerging adults with asthma: Bringing in a developmental perspective

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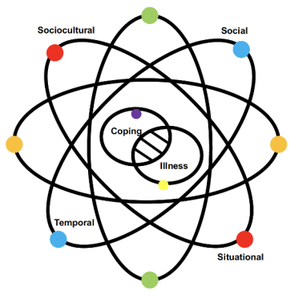


THE PROBLEM

- 10.3% of the asthma population in the U.S. are between 18-24 years old (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2013).
- Only ~15-40% of adolescents and emerging adults (EAs; ages 18-29) are adherent to preventive asthma medication.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

- The Common-Sense Model of Illness (CSM; Leventhal, Phillips, & Burns, 2016): Asthma representations including "no symptoms, no asthma"
- Theory of Emerging Adulthood (Arnett, 2015): Developmental tasks- Feeling in-between, Quest for autonomy, Greater self-focus, Optimism

AIM

To understand belief systems and sociocultural factors that influence medication adherence for emerging adults with asthma

PROPOSED METHODS

- Design: Qualitative study
- Participants:
  - 30 EAs from an undergraduate population
  - Current asthma diagnosis
  - Prescribed preventive asthma medication (see chart on right)
- Procedure:
  - 1 hour semi-structured interview covering four domains
  - Self report questionnaire of medication adherence, coping strategies, and illness and medication beliefs
- Analyses: thematic abductive approach with Dedoose

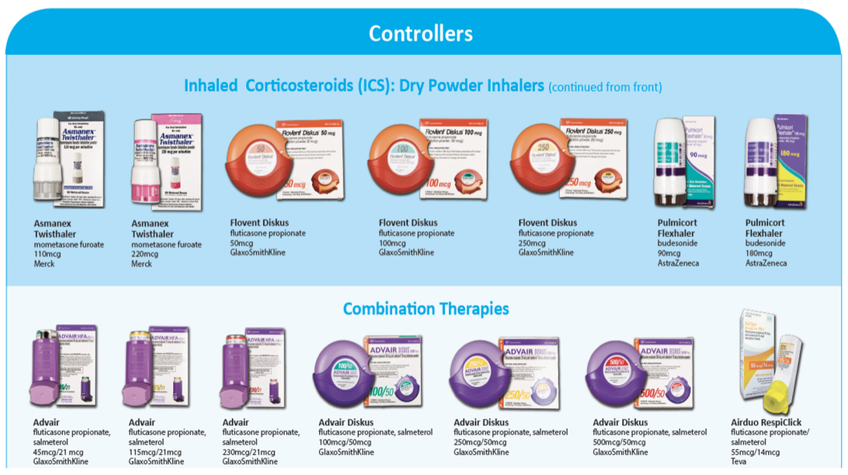
PROGRESS TO DATE

- Reasons for non-adherence are expected to align with CSM and highlight developmentally-relevant factors for asthma management during emerging adulthood
- Current stage of work: recruitment and enrollment has begun and will continue through the 2019-2020 academic year (N = 2)

DISCUSSION

- Study addresses an at-risk chronic illness population
- Understanding EAs' perspectives may enhance current research on the CSM and suggest intervention targets

SCREENING TOOL: PREVENTIVE ASTHMA MEDICATION



Note: Partial screener adapted from Minnesota Department of Health, 2017

Interview Domains
Experiences with Asthma
Impact of Asthma on Quality of Life
Illness Beliefs
Medication Adherence

"I remember towards the beginning when I got the nebulizer. It was advertised like... there was like old people and I felt like I was like only 16 so I was like, wow like I'm...something is wrong with me"

- Female, age 18

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