

[IMAGE]

Asthma Inhalers Stunt Growth in Kids?

Could a health device that helps children breathe also be responsible for stunting their growth? According to a new study, that could be the case.

The study published in the New England Journal of Medicine noted that children who inhaled steroid drugs to treat their asthma were slightly shorter at their full adult height than children who did not use the drug.

The study followed more than 1,000 children ages 5 to 12 who were treated for mild to moderate asthma for more than four years at eight centers.

Study participants were divided into three groups: one group was given the inhaled corticosteroid drug budesonide; a second group received nedocromil, a non-steroid medication; and the third group took a placebo.

Researchers followed 943 participants in the trial at regular intervals until they reached adult height. Study findings showed that the average height of patients who took budesonide, brand names Pulmicort and Rhinocort, was one-half inch shorter than the children who took nedocromil or the placebo.

Patients who experienced the slower growth were primarily between the ages of 5 to 11 when they began using budesonide, and the slower growth rate took place in the first two years of the four-year study.

If you are considering giving your child asthma medication, consult with your doctor first.

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