

# Asthma and COPD Awareness

Molina Healthcare of Ohio - Fall 2013



## Knowing Your Asthma Triggers

Many things around you can trigger asthma symptoms and cause an attack. Triggers can be simple items in your house or outside. Dust, pets or the weather may cause asthma symptoms to appear. Knowing what triggers your asthma symptoms can help you control your asthma.

Each person has his or her own triggers. Check the items that cause you to have asthma symptoms:

- Weather changes
- Exercise
- Illness, colds
- Dust
- Pollen
- Emotions
- Mold
- Pet dander
- Certain foods: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Tobacco or wood smoke
- Strong odors
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Discuss your triggers with your provider and family. You can work together to avoid the triggers and keep your asthma in control.



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All material in this newsletter is for information only. This does not replace your provider's advice.

This newsletter and future health education newsletters may be viewed on our website at [www.molinahealthcare.com](http://www.molinahealthcare.com).



## Prevent the Flu: Good Health Habits Can Help Stop Germs

The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get a flu shot each year. Flu season usually starts in October. Follow good health habits. Cover your mouth and nose when you cough and wash your hands often. This can help stop the spread of germs and prevent illnesses like the flu.

### 1. **Avoid close contact.**

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. This will help protect you from getting sick too.

### 2. **Stay home when you are sick.**

If possible, stay home from work and school. Try not to run errands when you are sick. You will help stop others from catching your illness.

### 3. **Cover your mouth and nose.**

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

### 4. **Clean your hands.**

Wash your hands often with soap and water. This will help to protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub (like hand sanitizer).

### 5. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**

Germs often spread when a person touches something that has germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.

### 6. **Practice other good health habits.**

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep and be physically active. Manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat healthy food.

## Quit for Good

If you smoke, quitting is the most important thing you can do to improve your health. It may help slow the progress of lung disease. If you have not quit smoking, do it now! It is not too late to improve your quality of life. It is the best thing you can do to live well with asthma or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Quitting may be hard, but it may be the most rewarding thing you will ever do.

Nicotine is inside cigarettes. It is very addictive. People often try to stop smoking two or three times before quitting for good. Studies show that each time you quit, you become stronger and learn more about what it takes for you to quit for good. Molina Healthcare offers no cost programs that can help you quit.

If you would like information on a program to help you stop smoking, call Ohio's Stop Smoking Program at (800) 784-8669.



## Eat Healthier, Breathe Easier

For people with a lung disease, such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), eating a balanced and healthy diet is important. People who suffer from lung disease use a lot of energy to breathe. The right food can give you energy and help you breathe easier. Eating healthy can also help fight infections and prevent illnesses.

### Healthy Nutrition Tips:

- Drink plenty of fluids like water. This helps to keep your airways clear of mucus. If you have a heart problem, talk with your provider about your fluid intake.
- Control your salt intake. Salt may keep fluids in your body. This may cause swelling. It can also make it hard to breathe.
- Limit caffeine. Caffeine can interfere with some medicines. It may make you feel nervous.
- Eat a variety of foods. This will help you get the nutrients you need. Make sure to include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein (like meat) and dairy products.
- Avoid overeating. Some foods may cause gas and bloating. These foods may include fried or greasy foods, apples, dried beans, broccoli and cabbage.
- Eat four to five small healthy meals a day. Large meals can make you feel full. This may make it hard to breathe.
- Eat your main meal early in the day. This may give you more energy during the day.
- Choose healthy foods that are easy to fix. Save your energy for eating. Make extra food and freeze it for quick meals.
- Use your oxygen during meals (if you use oxygen). Your body needs energy to eat and digest foods. This requires more oxygen.

**Eat healthy and breathe better!**

## Tips to Remember to Take Your Medicine

Do you forget to take your medicines? You are not alone. Here are some tips to help you remember to take your medicine.

**Put your pills where you will see them.** If you take a pill with breakfast, put your pills on the breakfast table. Always keep your pills in a place that is out of reach and away from children.

**Put a reminder note where you will see it.** Put a note on your coffee cup or the bathroom mirror if you take the medicine in the morning.

**Buy a pill organizer.** They come in many sizes and shapes. Your pharmacist can help you choose one.

**Set an alarm.** Use an alarm clock or set the alarm on your phone, watch or computer.

**Ask for help.** Ask family or friends to remind you, especially when you first start taking the medicine.

**Mark your medicine bottles with different colors.** For example, blue for morning, green for mid-day and red for evening.

Make sure to keep a list of all your current medicines. At least once a year, be sure to review all your medicines with your provider. This helps make sure that you:

- Take all the medicines you need
- Stop taking the ones you no longer need
- Take medicines that are safe to take together

Medicines are an important part of your treatment plan. Not taking them can affect how well your condition is managed.



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## Questions about Your Health?

*Call Our Nurse Advice Line!*

English: (888) 275-8750

Spanish: (866) 648-3537

**OPEN 24 HOURS!**

Your family's health is our priority!  
For the hearing impaired, please call

TTY (English): (866) 735-2929

TTY (Spanish): (866) 833-4703

or 711