



Asthma Warning Signs



Asthma attacks rarely occur without warning. Know the warning signs and how to react to them. This may help you avoid an asthma attack. Warning signs are not the same for everyone.

Some common warning signs that occur before an asthma attack are:

- Chronic cough, especially at night
- Chest tightness or pain
- Shortness of breath
- Tiredness or weakness
- Itchy, scratchy or sore throat
- Restlessness

Follow your asthma action plan as soon as you have any of these warning signs. If you do not have an asthma action plan, call your provider's office.

In This Issue

Asthma Warning Signs	pg 1
Working with the Provider to Control Asthma	pg 2
Tips to Prevent Further COPD Damage	pg 2
Taking Your Medicine	pg 3
Nurse Advice Line	pg 4

Need Help Quitting Smoking?

If you need help quitting smoking, call:

Covered Families and Children (CFC): 1-800-642-4168

Aged, Blind or Disabled (ABD): 1-866-408-9501

TTY for the hearing impaired: 1-800-750-0750 or 711.

You are receiving this newsletter as part of a Disease Management Program. If you do not want to receive this newsletter or participate in any Disease Management Program please let us know.

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

Working With your Provider to Control Asthma

Do you feel that you and your health care provider are working together in your asthma care? Your provider needs to learn a lot of information from you to give you the best treatment plan. It is important for you to see your provider as often as instructed, not just when you are sick. This way your health care provider can make sure that the treatment plan is working.

There are different types of asthma medicine. By following up with the provider, he or she will know how well the prescribed asthma medicines work for you. You may need to visit your provider more often at the beginning of your treatment. Visits may be set for every one to six months. Ask your provider when you should come back for a follow-up asthma visit.

At these visits, tell your provider:

- How often you use the medicine
- Whether you do not take the prescribed medicine
- What medicines are being used including home remedies (such as teas or herbs) or anything being used other than what your health care provider has ordered
- About any changes in your asthma symptoms

- How often you miss work or school or cannot exercise because of asthma
- How often you wake up at night because of asthma
- If you have been to the Emergency Room or Urgent Care Center
- At these visits, also ask your provider any questions you may have

Make the most of every visit with these tips:

- Bring all of your asthma medicines to each visit
- Bring a list of your other medications to each visit
- Write down the day, time and what you were doing when asthma symptoms began. Bring this information to each provider visit
- Bring a spacer to each visit if you have one
- Bring a peak flow meter to each visit if you have one

By giving and getting information, you and your health care provider can work together to control your asthma. If you need help finding a health care provider, please contact Molina Healthcare at the phone number listed on the back of your ID card.

Tips to Prevent Further COPD Damage

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, or COPD, is a disease that damages your lungs. It makes breathing very hard. COPD gets worse over time. You can't undo the damage to your lungs. But there are steps you can take to prevent more damage.

Here are some steps you can take that may help prevent your COPD from getting worse. They can also help make you feel better.

- Quit smoking now. Smoking irritates your lungs and airways. This makes it hard to breathe. It is never too late to quit. If you quit, you will find it easier to breathe. You will also prevent more damage to your lungs. If you quit now, it will improve your quality of life.
- Stay away from places and things that can irritate your lungs. This includes indoor and outdoor air pollution, secondhand smoke, smog, pollen, mold, dust mites, pet hair, cleaning supplies, cold dry air, hot humid air, or high altitudes.
- Get a flu shot. Health care providers suggest that all people with COPD get one. This is because people with COPD are at risk for developing complications from the flu, like pneumonia. The flu shot can help protect you. If you get the flu it can make your COPD worse. The flu shot can help protect you from this too.
- Stay away from people who are sick with a cold, flu, cough, or upper respiratory tract infection. Even if you catch a mild cold, it can make your COPD symptoms worse. Wash your hands often. Do not touch your face with your hands during the cold or flu season.
- Exercise. It will give you energy and build muscle strength. It can also help reduce shortness of breath. Exercise can improve your quality of life. Don't forget to talk to your health care provider before you start an exercise plan.
- Eat well. A healthy diet will help keep your lung muscles strong. It will also give you energy and help you fight off infections.

- Stay hydrated! Make sure you drink enough water and fluids. This will help keep mucus watery and easy to drain. This will make it easier to breathe. If you have a heart problem, talk to your health care provider about how much fluid you can drink.
- Get a spirometry test. This test tells your doctor how much air

your lungs can hold by simply breathing in and out. It is easy to do while you are at your doctor's office.

- Stick to your treatment plan. It will make you feel better, and you will be less likely to become depressed. Take your medicine exactly as your provider tells you to.

While COPD won't go away, there are things you can do to prevent more damage. If you take these steps, you will feel better. It will also help you manage your COPD. Talk to your provider if you have questions. You can also call Molina Healthcare's Nurse Advice Line for help.

Call: **English:** 1-888-275-8750, TTY: 1-866-735-2929

Spanish: 1-866-648-3537, TTY: 1-866-833-4703

Taking Your Medicine: Important Tips You Should Know

Medicine is taken to help you manage or treat a condition or illness. Medicine can become dangerous if it is not taken correctly or if it reacts with another medicine. Here are a few tips to make sure you are up-to-date with the medicine you are taking.

Tip #1: Knowing about your medicine

Create a list of the medications you take. Make sure to update this list any time your provider makes changes to your medicine. It is important to review your list of medicines with your provider, so bring this list with you to each visit with your provider. The list should include the following:

- **Name:** What is the name of the medicine?
- **Amount:** How much do you take?
- **When:** When do you take the medicine?
- **Purpose:** Why are you taking the medicine? What is it supposed to do?

Include any other non-prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, herbs, and vitamin supplements on your list. These may interact with the prescription medicines, so it's important for your provider to know everything you are taking. Make notes of any side effects that you have from your medicine and make sure to discuss with your provider.

Tip #2: Taking your medicine

In order for your medicine to do its job, you must take it as your provider prescribed. It may be hard to remember to take it sometimes when you go about your day. Here are some tips to help you keep on track with taking your medications:

- Take it at the same time everyday
- Take it together with other daily events, like brushing your teeth
- Use a pill box
- Ask someone close to you to help remind you
- Make yourself a reminder note and place it somewhere so you will see it everyday

Always take your medicine the way your provider told you to take it. Taking too much or skipping doses can be dangerous. **Do not stop taking your medicine unless your provider tells you to stop taking it.**

Tip #3: Medicine safety

- Use the same pharmacy to pick up all of your medicines.
- Do not share medicines.
- Do not use medicine that has expired.
- Let your provider know if you have any allergies to medicines.
- Keep your medicine out of reach from pets and children.
- Keep your medicine away from heat and damp areas.





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Questions about your health?

Call Our Nurse Advice Line!

English: 1-888-275-8750

Spanish: 1-866-648-3537

OPEN 24 HOURS!

Your family's health is our priority!

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or 711