

# Asthma and COPD Awareness

Molina Breathe with Ease® and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

## 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
- ☐ Tobacco or wood smoke
- ☐ Strong odors
- ☐ Certain foods: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_



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

**Important:** Most people with asthma should take a controller medicine. It helps prevent asthma symptoms. You need to take it every day. It is different from your rescue inhaler. You need to use a rescue inhaler for asthma symptom relief. Most people need two medicines to treat their asthma well. Talk to your provider about these medicines and any medicines you take.

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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).

Este boletín informativo también está disponible en español. Por favor, comuníquese con el Departamento de Servicios para Miembros para pedir una copia en español.

Todos los boletines informativos también están disponibles en [www.MolinaHealthcare.com](http://www.MolinaHealthcare.com).

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## 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. Avoiding the flu is important for everyone with asthma or COPD. Flu season usually starts in October. Follow good health habits. Cover your cough and wash your hands often. This can help stop the spread of germs and prevent illnesses like the flu.

1. **Avoid close contact with others 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 prevent 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.

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# Eat Healthy with COPD

If you have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), it is important to eat a balanced and healthy diet. The right food can give you energy and help you breathe easier. Eating healthy meals can also help fight infections and prevent illnesses.

## Healthy Nutrition Tips:

- **Drink plenty of water.** This helps to keep your airways clear of mucus.
- **Limit 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 does not mix well with some medicines.
- **Eat a wide range of foods.** This will help you get the nutrients you need. Make sure to include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein (like lean meat) and dairy products.
- **Avoid eating too much.** Some foods may cause gas and bloating.
- **Eat four to five small healthy meals a day.** Large meals can make you feel full. This may make it hard to breathe.

# Safe Exercise with COPD

Exercise can help your body use oxygen better. If you have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), find an activity you enjoy and commit to doing it every day. Walking is one of the best forms of exercise. Try to walk every day. It is simple and can be done at any time of year. Try walking around your home, at the mall or at a local park.

## Try to do these exercises at least three times per week:

- **Stretching** relaxes you and makes you more flexible. It is a good way to warm up before and cool down after you exercise.
- **Aerobic exercise** allows your body to use oxygen better. Examples of these exercises are:
  - Walking      • Climbing stairs
  - Dancing      • Swimming
- **Light weight training** makes your muscles stronger so your breathing muscles do not have to work as hard.

**Talk to your provider before starting your exercise program.** Your provider may ask you to use your inhaler before exercising.



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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 health is our priority!

For the hearing impaired, please call  
TTY (English and Spanish): 711

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Your Extended Family.