



Flu



Flu season is here. Are you prepared? There are simple steps that you can take to help prevent the flu. Follow these simple tips to reduce your risk for getting the flu:

- **Get the flu shot** every year
- **Don't touch your face.** If you touch a germ and then touch your face, you can catch the flu.
- **Keep it covered.** Cough or sneeze into your sleeve or use a tissue.
- **Wash your hands often**
- **Avoid people who are sick**

Even with the flu shot, you may still get the flu, but your symptoms won't be as bad. Remember, the flu is a virus. That means antibiotics won't cure it. Antibiotics fight illness caused by bacteria. They don't work against things usually caused by viruses like colds, the flu, or most coughs and sore throats.

People with a chronic condition are at higher risk for flu complications. Be prepared this flu season. Talk to your provider today to see if the flu shot is right for you.

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Need Help Quitting Smoking?

If you need help quitting, call the Free and Clear Program at 1-800-784-8669 for one-on-one help.

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. Please call us at 1-866-891-2320.

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

Asthma: Timing Your Medication

Good asthma control means taking your medication correctly. There are two main types of asthma medication. Quick-relief medication is one type. It acts fast to open up your airways. You should take your quick-relief medications when you first begin to feel symptoms. Your provider may want you to take this medication 15 minutes before exercise. You should carry your quick-relief inhaler with you all the time.

Long-term medication is the second type. It is used to prevent asthma symptoms. These drugs ease swelling on the inside of your airways. One kind is an inhaled steroid. It is important to take this medication even if you feel well. It works best when taken on a regular basis. You should rinse, gargle and spit with water after each dose of inhaled steroids.

Consistent use of medications is essential to symptom prevention. Take your preventive medication every day. Try taking your medication along with something you always do. This will help you remember to take it.

Here is a list of ideas from the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute:

- Keep your medication on the night stand next to the bed
- Take your medication right after you brush your teeth
- Put reminder notes in visible places like the bathroom mirror or front door
- Place your medication in a weekly pillbox
- Set an alarm to remind you to take your medication
- Remember to refill your prescription. Order and pick up the next refill one week before the medication is due to run out.

Knowing when and how to take your medication is important. It can make a difference in asthma control. Be sure to ask your provider if you have questions.

Asthma Triggers: Secondhand Smoke

What Is Secondhand Smoke?

Secondhand smoke is the exhaled smoke from a smoker's nose or mouth. It is also the smoke that comes from the end of a cigarette, cigar or pipe.

How Can Secondhand Smoke Trigger Asthma Attacks?

Secondhand smoke bothers the inflamed airways of a person with asthma. This can cause an asthma attack. This happens more often in children because their airways are still growing. Children can get high doses of secondhand smoke from family members who smoke.

How Can You Protect Yourself or Others From Secondhand Smoke?

- Do not smoke or let others smoke in your house or car
- Do not let others smoke near your children

Molina Healthcare of Washington has a stop smoking program called Free and Clear. Call **1-800-784-8669 for English, 1-877-266-3863 for Spanish and 1-877-777-6534 for Hearing Impaired** for more information.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

Staying on a Schedule with Your Medication

One great way to manage your Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is to know what medications you are taking and how they work. Staying on a schedule with your medication is important. There are many different types of COPD medications. They come in the form of pills, vapors, powders and liquids. What you are taking depends on your condition. Not everyone with COPD takes the same medication.

One type of COPD medication is a bronchodilator. It reduces shortness of breath by relaxing your airways. These are often taken by inhaler. They may be:

- short-acting - used to treat symptoms that come and go
- long-acting - used to prevent breathing problems before they start and keep symptoms under control

Corticosteroids can also be used to treat COPD. They reduce swelling and also may be used if you have asthma.

COPD medications often come in the form of an inhaler or nebulizer. They must be used correctly to get the right dose of medicine. Be sure to ask your provider to show you how to use your medication appropriately.

It is very important for you to take your medication regularly. Try to take it at the same time every day. Always take your medication, even if you feel good. Never stop taking your medication without talking to your provider first.

Here are some tips to help you remember to take your medication:

- Take your medicine with other daily habits, like when you brush your teeth
- Set your watch alarm to remind you to take your medication
- Leave yourself a note on the bathroom mirror
- Keep your medication in a place where you will see it
- Mark a calendar with your refill date

Taking your medication regularly can help you feel better. If you have questions about your medication, call your provider.





P.O. Box 4004
Bothell, WA 98041

5431DM1110



Questions about your health?

Call Our Nurse Advice Line!

1-888-275-8750

1-866-648-3537 Spanish

OPEN 24 HOURS!

Your family's health is our priority!

For the hearing impaired please call

TTY/1-866-735-2929 English

TTY/1-866-833-4703 Spanish