

MANAGING YOUR ASTHMA

Guidelines, resources and tips to help you
live better with chronic asthma



A wellness publication prepared for members of
Samaritan Health Plans

OUR MEMBERS. OUR NEIGHBORS.



Samaritan

Health Plan Operations

815 NW Ninth Street, Corvallis

One out of every fifteen people in the U.S. has asthma. One half of all asthma cases are allergy-related.



Become an active participant in managing your asthma. It could help you to breathe easier. Take a moment to review these key elements to successful asthma management:

Take your daily medicine every day

It sounds simple, but by taking your daily control medicine you can help prevent asthma attacks. Do not skip a day unless you have been instructed to do so by your doctor.

My daily control medicine is:

Keep your rescue medicine with you at all times

Always have your rescue medicine with you so that whenever you have an attack you will get the treatment you need right away.

My rescue medicine is:

Avoid your asthma triggers

By remembering and avoiding the things that cause your asthma attacks, called "triggers," you can reduce the likelihood of an attack.

My asthma triggers are:

See your doctor for checkups and any time your asthma gets worse

Keeping and making regular appointments with your doctor ensures that your treatment matches the level of severity of your asthma. If your asthma worsens, do not tough it out until your next appointment. Seek care as soon as is reasonably possible.

MANAGING YOUR ASTHMA

Before your next doctor's visit

Is your asthma under control? Take the time to answer these questions below before each doctor's visit and take your responses with you to review with your doctor.



IN THE PAST TWO (2) WEEKS:

Have you coughed, wheezed, felt short of breath, or had chest tightness:

Yes No

- During the day?
- At night, causing you to wake up?
- During or soon after exercise?
- Have you needed more "quick-relief" (rescue) medicine than usual?
- Has your asthma kept you from doing anything you wanted to do?

If yes, what was it?

- Has your asthma medicines caused you any problems, like shakiness, sore throat, or upset stomach?

IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS:

Yes No

- Have you missed school or work because of your asthma?
- Have you gone to the emergency room or hospital because of your asthma?

What your answers mean

Yes No

- If you answered YES to any of the questions, something needs to be done. Talk to your doctor to find out how to get your asthma under control.
- If you answered NO to all the questions, your asthma is under control.



Talk with your doctor about routine care. Remember to follow your treatment plan and ask about the following:

What do I need for an Asthma Action Plan?

Everyone with asthma should have an Action Plan. The plan outlines what you can do to control your asthma and helps you know when your treatment needs adjustment.

How frequently should I schedule an appointment?

When your asthma is well controlled, you may see your doctor every 3 to 6 months. You may need to be seen more often if your asthma is not well controlled.

How do I manage my medication?

Make sure you know how to use your Daily Control Medication and when to use your Rescue Medication. It is also a good idea to know how to pronounce the names of your medication and your dosage for emergency situations.

Do I need a lung function test?

Spirometer – This is a standard test done in your doctor's office to measure how well your lungs are working.

Pulmonary Function Tests (PFT) – This is a test performed in a special lab to provide your doctor with more information than the spirometer alone can about your lung capacity and function.

How do I test myself at home?

Using a **PEAK FLOW METER** at home can help you monitor how well air is moving in and out of your lungs. If you do not have a peak flow meter, ask your doctor about using one with your Asthma Action Plan.

We have compiled a list of local resources that provide a variety of programs, classes and support groups. Some classes and programs may charge a fee. Those fees may be covered by your Samaritan health plan. Check your member handbook or contact your plan for assistance.

ASTHMA / CHRONIC CONDITION PROGRAMS
TOBACCO USE

Asthma Clinic

Located at Samaritan Albany General Hospital
(541) 812-4119

Better Breathers

Albany (541) 812-4119

Lincoln City (541) 265-2047

Newport (541) 574-4856

For people with chronic respiratory ailments. Topics include medication, diet, oxygen equipment and panic attacks.

Oregon Asthma Program

(971) 673-0984

TTY (971) 673-0372

www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/asthma

Living Well with Chronic Conditions

Linn and Benton Counties, (541) 451-6466

Lincoln County, (541) 265-0465

Six-week workshop that teaches practical skills for living a healthy life with an ongoing health condition.

Oregon Quit Line

1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)

Spanish Language Line

1-877-2NO-FUME (1-877-266-3863)

www.oregonquitline.org