An Action Plan for Asthma
Do you have a plan for your asthma? You should! Planning ahead helps you get a handle on your asthma rather than letting it handle you. Work with your provider to create an asthma action plan. It should include goals and best practices. It should also include information on triggers and the steps to take based on how bad your asthma symptoms are. The plan will include your provider’s instructions about when to take certain medications or when to increase or decrease the dose.

If you don’t have an action plan, you can find a blank one on the PrimeWest Health website at www.primewest.org/asthma. You can print it off and take it to your provider, who can help you fill it out. You can also get one by calling Jennifer at 1-888-588-4420 ext. 5342. TTY users call 1-800-627-3529 or 711. These calls are free.

Stay Well—and Out of the Hospital
In the same way you want to avoid having an asthma attack, you want to avoid having to go to the hospital or emergency room (ER) because of one. Here are some tips to help.

• Avoid your asthma triggers as much as possible.
• Monitor your symptoms and tell your provider about any changes.
• See your provider regularly and follow your treatment plan. Work with your provider to adjust your plan if needed.
• Take your medication as prescribed. Do not skip doses, change, or stop taking your medication without talking to your provider.
• Talk to your provider about what to do in an emergency. Follow your action plan and keep a written list of emergency instructions with you at all times.
• Be prepared to treat an asthma attack while it’s still in its early stages. Have everything you need handy, including nebulizers, inhalers, and/or oral medications. Make sure you have your quick-relief medication with you at all times.

If you do need to go to the ER, take your medication before you leave. The sooner you get the medication into your system, the sooner it can start working. If the medication has a chance to work while you are in the ER, you might be stable enough to be discharged home instead of having to transfer from the ER to the hospital.

Following the tips listed here can help keep your asthma under control and can help you avoid a trip to the ER or hospital. If you are having trouble and are not sure what to do, call your provider or 911.

Source: The Asthma Center
Avoiding Asthma Attacks

Asthma symptoms may interfere with your daily activities, making it hard to do even small tasks. Symptoms can happen any time during the day or night. When they get really bad, you can have a serious asthma attack that could become life threatening if not treated. Prevention and long-term control are important when it comes to keeping your asthma in check and stopping asthma symptoms before they start. You can do this by taking medication as prescribed, monitoring your asthma, and working closely with your provider.

Take your medication
There are 2 general kinds of medication for asthma. One is for long-term control and the other is for quick relief of symptoms.

- Long-term control medication is for symptom prevention. You take it every day to reduce the inflammation in your airways that causes asthma symptoms. Don’t stop taking long-term control medication even if you feel okay. Your symptoms may return or get worse if you do.
- Quick-relief medication is for symptom relief. You should take it when you first notice asthma symptoms. Carry your quick-relief medication with you at all times in case you need it.

See more about medication on the next page.

Monitor your asthma
Another way to manage your asthma is self-monitoring. This means figuring out what makes your symptoms better or worse. Things that make your symptoms worse are called triggers and can include things like pollen, mold, dust, smoke, and pet dander.

If you can identify when your symptoms are worse, you may be able to identify what your triggers are. Keeping a journal can help you do this. Keep track of your symptoms each day. Also write down when you used a quick-relief medication, what you were doing, and where you were when you needed to use it. Be as specific as possible. If you can nail down the triggers that make your asthma worse, you can avoid them. This will cut down on the number and severity of your asthma attacks.

As an example, if you write in your journal that you needed to use your quick-relief medication every time you visit the home of a friend who has a dog, pet dander may be one of your triggers. Now that you know this, you can work to avoid this trigger. Ask your friend to come to your house or meet somewhere else.

One other thing you will want to write down is how well your quick-relief medication worked. When you see your provider, you can talk about what you’ve noticed and decide together if your medication should be adjusted.

Work with your provider
Your provider plays an important role in caring for your asthma, and it’s a good idea to have regular asthma checkups with him. Your provider can do the following for you:

- Help you control allergies or other conditions that make your asthma worse
- Talk to you about getting a pneumonia vaccine and a yearly flu vaccine
- If you smoke, help you come up with a plan to help you stop
- Work with you to come up with an asthma action plan (read more about this on the cover)

Doing these things can help stop asthma from interfering with your daily life. It can seem like a lot to stay on top of, but not having to suffer through an asthma attack is worth it.

Sources: The Asthma Center Education and Research Fund, Mayo Clinic
More on Medication

Do you feel that your long-term or quick-relief medication isn’t working for you? Are you having side effects? Tell your provider! One size does not fit all when it comes to medication, and your provider can make adjustments to find the right fit for you. Be sure to work with your provider to make medication changes. Don’t stop or change your medication on your own, and make sure to refill your prescriptions before they run out!

Care Coordination and Case Management: We’re Here for You

PrimeWest Health provides Care Coordination and Case Management programs to help keep members healthy. These programs let us work with you and your health care providers to make sure you get the services you need. Your care coordinator/case manager can do the following:

- Help you when you have questions about your health care or prescriptions.
  - Find answers to your questions about what your medications are for, why you are taking them, and how to take them safely. Get help finding a new health care provider or specialist such as a behavioral health specialist or dentist in your area.
- Schedule medical appointments as needed.
  - It’s important to see your provider as recommended. But sometimes it’s hard to make an appointment. Your care coordinator or case manager can help with that!
- Help you learn good health practices that may prevent problems.
  - Get information on a wide range of health topics and work on a step-by-step action plan to reach your personal health goals.
- Help arrange services you need to stay safe and healthy at home.
  - Make sure you are getting the services you need. Get your care needs assessed and get help setting up assistive services.

PrimeWest Health encourages you to take advantage of these programs. Let your care coordinator or case manager know when and how she can help you get the care and services you need. If you do not know who your care coordinator or case manager is, call one of the following:

- Jennifer at 1-888-588-4420 ext. 5342
- Member Services at 1-866-431-0801
- TTY users call 1-800-627-3529 or 711

These calls are free.

Pulmonologists and Allergy Specialists

Seeing a specialized provider can be helpful when you have asthma. These specialists include pulmonologists and allergy specialists.

A pulmonologist deals with lung and respiratory diseases. She can help you work to control symptoms like wheezing, chest tightness, cough, and shortness of breath. Your provider may refer you to this specialist if you have any of the following:

- Poorly controlled asthma
- A hospital admission due to asthma
- A life-threatening asthma attack

Regular follow-up is key. It can prevent serious complications related to your asthma.

If you have allergies, your provider may also refer you to an allergy specialist. This specialist can help you manage your allergies. This is important because an allergic reaction can cause an asthma attack. Keeping in close contact with this specialist can help you avoid this cycle.

If you are referred to a specialist, be sure to make an appointment. And be sure to go to it!

Source: Verywell

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Note: The information in this magazine is not professional medical advice. It is not a substitute for diagnosis or treatment. Do not ignore your health care provider’s advice or wait to ask for it because of something you read here. Links to other websites are provided as a resource only. PrimeWest Health does not endorse, recommend, or pay for products or services offered by such sites.
Attention. If you need free help interpreting this document, call the above number.

Mلاحظة: إذا أردت مساعدة مجانية لترجمة هذه الوثيقة، اتصل على الرقم أعلاه.

Attention. Si vous avez besoin d’une aide gratuite pour interpréter le présent document, veuillez appeler au numéro ci-dessus.

Thov ua twb zoo nyeem. Yog hais tias koj xav tau kev pab txhais lus rau tsab ntaub ntawv no pub dawb, ces hu rau tus najnpawb xov tooj saum toj no.

알려드립니다. 이 문서에 대한 이해를 돕기 위해 무료로 제공되는 도움을 받으시려면 위의 전화번호로 연락하십시오.

โปรดทราบ. คุณสามารถขอความช่วยเหลือในการแปลเอกสารฟรีได้ ที่เบอร์โทรศัพท์ด้านบน.

Hubachiisa. Dokumentii kun tola akka siif hiikamu gargaarsa hoo feete, lakkoobsa gubbatti kennname bilbili.

Внимание: если вам нужна бесплатная помощь в устном переводе данного документа, позвоните по указанному выше телефону.

Digniin. Haddii aad u baahantahay caawimaad lacag-la’aan ah ee tarjumaadda (afcelinta) qoraalkan, lambarka kore wac.

Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para interpretar este documento, llame al número indicado arriba.

Chú ý. Nếu quý vị cần được giúp dịch tài liệu này miễn phí, xin gọi số bên trên.
Civil Rights Notice

Discrimination is against the law. PrimeWest Health does not discriminate on the basis of any of the following:

- race
- color
- national origin
- creed
- religion
- sexual orientation
- public assistance status
- age
- disability (including physical or mental impairment)
- sex (including sex stereotypes and gender identity)
- marital status
- political beliefs
- medical condition
- health status
- receipt of health care services
- claims experience
- medical history
- genetic information

Auxiliary Aids and Services: PrimeWest Health provides auxiliary aids and services, like qualified interpreters or information in accessible formats, free of charge and in a timely manner to ensure an equal opportunity to participate in our health care programs. Contact PrimeWest Health at memberservices@primewest.org, or call Member Services at 1-866-431-0801 (toll free) or TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711.

Language Assistance Services: PrimeWest Health provides translated documents and spoken language interpreting, free of charge and in a timely manner, when language assistance services are necessary to ensure limited English speakers have meaningful access to our information and services. Contact PrimeWest Health at memberservices@primewest.org, or call Member Services at 1-866-431-0801 (toll free) or TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711.

Civil Rights Complaints

You have the right to file a discrimination complaint if you believe you were treated in a discriminatory way by PrimeWest Health. You may contact any of the following four agencies directly to file a discrimination complaint.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office for Civil Rights (OCR)
You have the right to file a complaint with the OCR, a federal agency, if you believe you have been discriminated against because of any of the following:

- race
- color
- national origin
- age
- disability
- sex
- religion (in some cases)
Contact the OCR directly to file a complaint:
Director
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office for Civil Rights
200 Independence Avenue SW
Room 515F
HHH Building
Washington, DC 20201
Customer Response Center: Toll-free: 800-368-1019
TDD 800-537-7697
Email: ocrmail@hhs.gov

Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR)
In Minnesota, you have the right to file a complaint with the MDHR if you believe you have been discriminated against because of any of the following:
- race
- color
- national origin
- religion
- creed
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marital status
- public assistance status
- disability

Contact the MDHR directly to file a complaint:
Minnesota Department of Human Rights
540 Fairview Avenue North
Suite 201
St. Paul, MN 55104
651-539-1100 (voice)
800-657-3704 (toll free)
711 or 800-627-3529 (MN Relay)
651-296-9042 (fax)
Info.MDHR@state.mn.us (email)

Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)
You have the right to file a complaint with DHS if you believe you have been discriminated against in our health care programs because of any of the following:
- race
- color
- national origin
- creed
- religion
- sexual orientation
- public assistance status
- age
- disability (including physical or mental impairment)
- sex (including sex stereotypes and gender identity)
- marital status
- political beliefs
- medical condition
- health status
- receipt of health care services
- claims experience
- medical history
- genetic information

Complaints must be in writing and filed within 180 days of the date you discovered the alleged discrimination. The complaint must contain your name and address and describe the discrimination you are complaining about. After we get your complaint, we will review it and notify you in writing about whether we have authority to investigate. If we do, we will investigate the complaint.
DHS will notify you in writing of the investigation’s outcome. You have the right to appeal the outcome if you disagree with the decision. To appeal, you must send a written request to have DHS review the investigation outcome. Be brief and state why you disagree with the decision. Include additional information you think is important.

If you file a complaint in this way, the people who work for the agency named in the complaint cannot retaliate against you. This means they cannot punish you in any way for filing a complaint. Filing a complaint in this way does not stop you from seeking out other legal or administrative actions.

Contact DHS directly to file a discrimination complaint:
Civil Rights Coordinator
Minnesota Department of Human Services
Equal Opportunity and Access Division
P.O. Box 64997
St. Paul, MN 55164-0997
651-431-3040 (voice) or use your preferred relay service

PrimeWest Health Complaint Notice
You have the right to file a complaint with PrimeWest Health if you believe you have been discriminated against because of any of the following:
- medical condition
- health status
- receipt of health care services
- claims experience
- medical history
- genetic information
- disability (including mental or physical impairment)
- marital status
- age
- sex (including sex stereotypes and gender identity)
- sexual orientation
- national origin
- race
- color
- religion
- creed
- public assistance status
- political beliefs

You can file a complaint and ask for help in filing a complaint in person or by mail, phone, fax, or email at:
Rebecca Fuller
Civil Rights Coordinator
PrimeWest Health
3905 Dakota St
Alexandria, MN 56308
Toll Free: 1-866-431-0801
TTY: 1-800-627-3529 or 711
Fax: 1-320-762-8750
Email: rebecca.fuller@primewest.org

American Indian Health Statement
American Indians can continue or begin to use tribal and Indian Health Services (IHS) clinics. We will not require prior approval or impose any conditions for you to get services at these clinics. For elders age 65 years and older this includes Elderly Waiver (EW) services accessed through the tribe. If a doctor or other provider in a tribal or IHS clinic refers you to a provider in our network, we will not require you to see your primary care provider prior to the referral.