Make Medication a Must

There are many things that can be done to help control asthma. One of the most important is taking the medication prescribed by your provider. Make sure you follow your provider’s instructions about when to take it, how often to take it, what dose to take, and how long you should keep taking it.

There are risks to not taking your medication as prescribed. These include increased coughing, wheezing, breathlessness, and tightness in your chest. These symptoms are called asthma attacks or asthma flare-ups. They can be serious and can land you in the emergency room or hospital or cause you to miss school or work.

If you have been prescribed both quick-relief and long-term control medications, be sure to take both as directed.
- Quick-relief medications help control the symptoms of an asthma attack.
- Long-term medications help you have fewer and milder attacks. They need to be taken even when you don’t have symptoms. Taking a long-term medication won’t help during an asthma attack.

If you follow your provider’s recommendations and still have a lot of flare-ups, talk to your provider. They may be able to adjust your medications so you can feel your best.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
**Welcome Fall...and Asthma Triggers**

The temperature is dropping and there is a chill in the air. It's time to pull out your jacket from the back of the closet. Why? Because it's fall! There are a lot of reasons to enjoy the season. The leaves turn pretty colors, and you can curl up on the couch with a mug of apple cider. On the other hand, fall brings a lot of asthma triggers like ragweed pollen, mold, and dust. This can make fall one of the worst times of year for your asthma.

**Triggers**

- **Ragweed.** Ragweed pollen is the most common fall allergy trigger and can be a problem until it's killed by a hard freeze. The pollen from ragweed can be carried hundreds of miles by the wind. This means even if it doesn't grow near you, it can still affect you.
- **Mold.** Many people start to notice the effects of outdoor mold in the fall. This is because mold loves to grow in damp spots like leaf piles or decaying summer plants. Mold is also carried by the wind.
- **Dust.** Dust mites are a year-round problem for allergy sufferers. But they can be especially pesky in the fall. That's because turning on your heat for the first time in the fall stirs up dust mites that have made your heating system their home.

**What you can do**

- Stay indoors and keep the windows closed when the pollen count is at its highest. This is usually in the late morning or midday.
- Ask a family member, friend, or neighbor to do your fall yardwork. Stay away from the mold that gets stirred up by raking!
- Take off your shoes and jacket when you come in from outside. This helps prevent pollen and mold from spreading around your house.
- Shower after being outside to wash the allergens off.
- Clean your heating vents and change the filter before you turn on your heat for the season.

One other important thing to do is to talk to your health care provider. They can tell you about medication that you might find helpful.
Choose Your Room, Not the Emergency Room or a Hospital Room

Nobody wants to end up in the emergency room or the hospital. The bad news is that people with poorly controlled asthma can sometimes find themselves there. The good news is that there are ways to help prevent this.

Make and keep routine appointments with your health care provider. Tell your provider if you have new or increased symptoms or changes in symptoms. This includes things like chest tightness, wheezing, or coughing. Your provider may want to work with you to complete an asthma action plan or adjust your medications.

Take your medications exactly as prescribed. If you have questions about how to take certain inhaled or oral medications, ask your provider.

Know what your asthma triggers are. When you know what your asthma triggers are, you can try to avoid them. And, if you do come in contact with them, you can start managing your symptoms early. Common triggers include dust mites, cigarette smoke, smoke from burning wood and grass, mold, and pet dander. Talk to your provider about what triggers your asthma. Allergy testing may be recommended.

Get your annual flu vaccine. When you have asthma, your airways are already sensitive and swollen and having the flu makes the problem worse. The lung irritation that the flu causes can trigger an asthma attack. Read the article below to learn more about asthma and the flu.

You can make a difference: do what you can to control your asthma and increase your odds of staying out of the hospital! And, as a bonus, you’ll sleep better, cough and wheeze less, and miss fewer days of work or school.

Source: CDC

Got Asthma? Don’t Get the Flu, Too!

Did you know that people with asthma are at a higher risk for complications when they get the flu?

- When you have asthma, your airways are already sensitive and swollen. The flu makes this worse.
- If the flu infects your lungs, it can cause asthma attacks and make your symptoms worse.
- The flu can lead to pneumonia. People with asthma are more likely to develop pneumonia after having the flu than people without asthma.

As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes, “Asthma is the most common medical condition among children hospitalized with the flu and one of the more common medical conditions among adults hospitalized with the flu.”

So, even though you aren’t more likely to get the flu if you have asthma, you are more likely to get really sick if you do get the flu. This is why getting an annual flu vaccine is important. In fact, it’s so important that the CDC recommends that everyone over age 6 months get one each year, with some exceptions. The “flu season” can start in the late fall, so talk to your health care provider today about getting a flu vaccine!

Source: CDC
Health and wellness or prevention information

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.

1-866-431-0801 (toll free); TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711

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

請注意，如果您需要免費協助傳譯這份文件，請撥打上面的電話號碼。

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. ท่านสามารถติดต่อเราได้โดยติดต่อกับตัวเลขที่ระบุไว้ในเอกสารของกรมอัยการมิตร, ซึ่งให้บริการฟรีผ่านทางที่ติดต่อ.

Hubachiisa. Dokumenttiin kun tola akka siif hiikamu gargaarsa hoo feete, lakkoobsa gubbatti kenneame 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 đỡ dịch tài liệu này miễn phí, xin gọi số bên trên.

LB2 (10-20)
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.