

Fall 2010

# Could it be asthma?

## How to spot the symptoms

Imagine the challenge of trying to breathe through a straw for minutes or hours on end.

That's how breathing can sometimes feel for people who have asthma—a chronic lung disease that causes the airways to narrow, making it difficult to breathe.

More than 22 million Americans now live with asthma, and that number continues to rise. While the disease affects people of all ages, it most often starts in childhood.

It's important to recognize the symptoms of asthma and to get medical help for it. People with asthma—both young and old—can lead normal, active lives. The key to doing so is learning how to manage the disease.

### What are the signs?

Sometimes asthma symptoms are mild and go away on their own. But at other times, symptoms can get worse and trigger an asthma attack.

Common asthma symptoms include:

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Chest tightness
- Shortness of breath.

Not all people with asthma have the same symptoms. And having these symptoms

doesn't always mean someone has the disease.

If you suspect you have asthma, see a doctor. He or she can use your medical history, a physical exam and a simple lung function test to determine whether you have the disease.

### What causes it?

The cause of someone's asthma isn't always known. But a number of things—known as triggers—can bring about or worsen symptoms. Common triggers include:

- Allergens, such as dust mites; animal dander; mold; and pollens from trees, grasses and flowers
- Cigarette smoke, air pollution and certain chemicals
- Respiratory infections



- Physical activity
- Stress.

If your doctor confirms that you do have asthma, he or she can help you identify

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# Get your flu shot now

Flu season is here. It's not too late to protect your health with a flu shot. Your flu shot will last the entire season and will help reduce your chances of getting very sick if you get the flu.

The flu vaccine is safe and should be given to all pregnant women in any trimester. Postpartum women, even if they are breastfeeding, can receive the flu vaccine also.

Every member of your family should get a shot. Ask your doctor which shot is best for each member of the family. If you are 20 years of age or older, you will have to get your flu shot at the local Department of Health. The charge is \$25 per shot, but no one will be turned away because of inability to pay.

## Using your ID card

Your ID card is your key to getting health care. Be sure to bring it with you every time you see your provider or get any other health services.

To protect your ID card, don't let anyone else use it. Call Enrollee Services at **1-866-258-4326** if your card is lost or stolen. Also call if you change your name, address or phone number. We will send you a new card.

## Important notice about dental care

Effective Jan. 1, 2011, enhanced adult dental care will no longer be offered by Integral Quality Care. We will continue to offer emergency dental services and dentures to adults. If you have a question regarding this change, please call Enrollee Services at 1-866-258-4326.

## Could it be asthma?

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your particular triggers and give you advice on how to avoid them.

### Treating asthma

There is no cure for asthma. But it can be successfully managed if you learn how to control your asthma, get ongoing care and watch for signs that the disease is getting worse.

Asthma is treated with two types of medicines:

- Quick-relief medications provide temporary relief from asthma symptoms.
- Long-term control medications are taken daily to control airway swelling.

It's important to follow your doctor's advice on the proper use of asthma medications.

Most of the time you can treat asthma symptoms on your own. But if you have trouble walking or talking because you are out of breath or if you develop blue lips or fingernails, you need to seek immediate medical attention.

By working with your doctor and learning how to manage your asthma, you can breathe freely and live an active life.

Sources: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute



## Antibiotics

# Use them right

Antibiotics can seem to work wonders. But if you don't use them right, they can end up doing more harm than good.

Here's how to get the most from antibiotics:

- Take all the medicine just as your doctor says. Don't quit taking it early, even if you're feeling better.
- Don't stop taking the antibiotic unless your doctor tells you to.
- Don't save the medicine to use later.
- Never take someone else's medicine.

If you may have trouble remembering to take your antibiotic, a few easy tricks can help.

For instance, keep the medicine bottle in a

handy spot. If you need to take a dose first thing in the morning, try putting the bottle next to your toothbrush.

You can also use a pill case. This will help you keep track of pills by day and dose.

Another way to keep on track is to make reminders for yourself. Write down the times you need to take the antibiotic. You can keep the schedule on paper or your computer.

And a last tip: Antibiotics don't work on illnesses caused by a virus. This includes colds, the flu and most sore throats. So don't ask for antibiotics if your doctor says they are not needed.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; U.S. Food and Drug Administration

## Your over-the-counter benefit

Sometimes your doctor will suggest an over-the-counter (OTC) drug for your medical problem. These drugs do not require a prescription.

As an Integral Quality Care enrollee, you receive a \$25 per family over-the-counter benefit each month. This benefit allows you to select many items from your local pharmacy, such as aspirin, cough medicine or nose drops.

To use your benefit, go to a Publix or Winn Dixie store that has a pharmacy. Collier Health Service pharmacies also offer this benefit. Select the items you need and show the clerk your Integral Quality Care ID card. You will not pay for over-the-counter items up to \$25.

For more details about what items are on the OTC list, call Enrollee Services at **1-866-258-4326** or go to **[www.integralqualitycare.com](http://www.integralqualitycare.com)**.

**Bacteria become resistant when antibiotics are used incorrectly.**

# Soothe your child's sore throat

When a child has a sore throat, making it better is a parent's goal.

Most sore throats are caused by viruses—germs antibiotics can't treat. So while you can't usually count on antibiotics for a quick cure, you can still help your little one feel better.

**Try some tenderness.** When kids get sore throats, the pain is often a symptom of a cold. They may also have a runny nose, low fever and a cough. Sore throats caused by

colds usually get better on their own. In the meantime, to help ease the pain, you can:

- Give your child a lot of fluids.
- Offer frozen treats, such as Popsicles or ice chips.
- Help your child rest.

Over-the-counter medicines may also help ease your child's sore throat pain and other cold symptoms. But some may not be safe for kids. Be sure to read the label first.

Sometimes a sore throat can mean an infection a doctor should treat. See your provider if your child's sore throat lasts longer than a week or if you notice any of these signs: ■ A high fever ■ Swollen neck glands ■ Vomiting ■ Pus in the throat ■ Trouble swallowing or breathing.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



## Turkey salad with cranberries and pecans

### Ingredients

- 2 cups (8 ounces) diced, cooked turkey breast
- 1 small Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored and diced
- 3 tablespoons dried cranberries, coarsely chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped pecans
- 1 can (11 ounces) mandarin orange sections, drained and cut into small sections

- ¼ cup fat-free plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon reduced-fat mayonnaise dressing
- 1½ teaspoons brown mustard
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Ground black pepper
- 8 Boston lettuce leaves

### Instructions

- In mixing bowl, combine turkey, apple, cranberries and pecans. Add orange sections. Set aside.
- In a small bowl, whisk together yogurt, mayonnaise and mustard. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Drizzle dressing over turkey mixture while using a fork to gently mix in.
- Arrange 2 lettuce leaves on each of 4 salad plates. Mound ¼ of salad on top of lettuce and serve immediately, accompanied by whole-grain crackers, if desired.

### Nutrition information

Makes 4 servings. Per serving:  
203 calories, 6g total fat, 1g saturated fat,  
20g carbohydrates, 19g protein, 3g dietary  
fiber, 391mg sodium

Source: American Institute for Cancer Research

## Get to know your PCP

As a plan enrollee, you will have a primary care provider (PCP) who helps manage your health care.

As soon as you get your ID card, call your PCP for a regular checkup. Get to know

him or her. Tell your PCP about your health care needs.

If you need a specialist, your PCP will help you get set up. If you have an after-hours emergency, your PCP is the first person to call. He or she will give you information on how to handle your emergency.

## Ask Me 3™

Everyone needs help with medical information. Every time you talk to your doctor or pharmacist, use the following Ask Me 3™ questions. Asking these questions may help you stay well or get better. Write down the answers to your questions.

- What is my main problem?
- What do I need to do?
- Why is it important for me to do this?

Knowing how to treat your illness is the first step to getting better. Go to [www.integralqualitycare.com](http://www.integralqualitycare.com) for more information. Click on "Enrollees" and look under "Ask Me 3™."

## Tips for better health

- See your primary care provider (PCP) for regular checkups. If you need help finding a PCP, call Enrollee Services at **1-866-258-4326**.
- Always go to your PCP visits.
- If you can't keep your appointment, call to cancel it and make another one.
- Follow the directions your PCP gives you.
- If you take medicine every day, get refills at least five days **before** you run out.
- Never share medicine with anyone else.
- Eat right, get enough sleep and exercise.
- Brush your teeth at least two times a day.
- Wear your seat belt.

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# INTEGRAL

INSIDE INTEGRAL is published as a community service for the friends and enrollees of Integral Quality Care, 4630 Woodland Corporate Blvd., Tampa, FL 33614, telephone 1-866-258-4326.

This newsletter is general health information and should not replace care you get from your doctor. It is not meant to replace advice you get from your doctor. The plan does not provide health care; you must receive health care from your doctor. Always ask your doctor or other health care provider for information about your own health care needs.

Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

**Enrollee Services 1-866-258-4326**

**[www.integralqualitycare.com](http://www.integralqualitycare.com)**

**Serving the counties of Collier, Manatee and Polk.**