



Asthma Awareness

Asthma is a chronic health condition. Asthma symptoms include shortness of breath, wheezing, and difficulty breathing. Asthma can be caused by many things such as pollution, infection, and/or a family history.

McLaren Health Plan has an Asthma Program that can help you. If you have asthma, you are eligible to participate and will receive:

- Personal contacts from our asthma management nurse
- Educational materials and newsletters
- Assistance from health care professionals to help you manage your health

Please call Customer Service at (888) 327-0671 if you are interested in joining our Asthma Outreach Program.

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- G-3245 Beecher Road •
Flint, MI • 48532

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November 2011



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Staying Calm during an Asthma Attack

Many asthma attacks are minor and last only a few minutes. But those few minutes can be very scary. Here are some steps you can take to help your child and yourself stay calm:

- Work with your doctor to write an **Action Plan** and post it on your refrigerator where it can be easily found
- Understand exactly what you should do when an attack strikes
- If your child has an asthma attack, know when to administer rescue medicine and when to seek medical help
- Practice your **Action Plan** with your child regularly so the child becomes familiar with the process
- Talk to your child about how they should always find an adult when they begin to have symptoms
- If the child is alone, make sure they have emergency contacts and know how to use them
- Create a checklist and share it with your child's caregivers
- If you have asthma, make sure your children know **your Action Plan** and what to do in case of an attack

Please don't smoke!

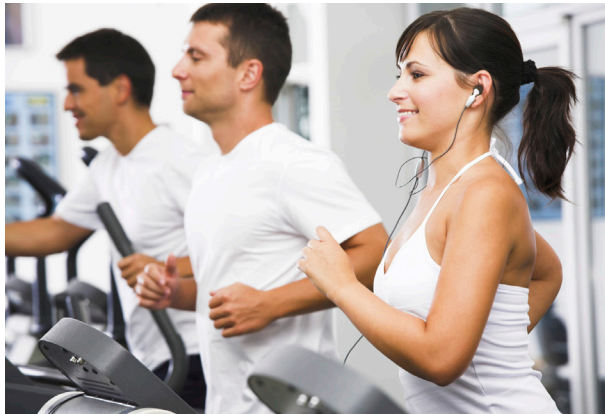
If you have asthma, smoking can make the asthma worse. If you are a Medicaid member, we have a smoking cessation program to help you quit!

Call 800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669)

Exercising With Asthma

Exercise benefits everyone and it is no different for people with asthma. You might be afraid to exercise for fear of triggering an attack. It's important for people with asthma to exercise as much as they can to stay fit and to control their weight. Here are some tips on exercising:

- Talk to your doctor **first** and set up a safe exercise plan that is right for you
- Be sure you have good control of your asthma symptoms
- Take it slow and one step at a time
- Look for activities that aren't too hard on your lungs, such as:
 - Yoga
 - Walking
 - Swimming
 - Biking
 - Hiking
- Don't exercise in very cold weather or if you do, cover your mouth with a scarf
- Avoid exercising in hot, humid weather or during allergy season
- During allergy season or unsafe weather conditions try exercising indoors



Aftermath of Your Child's Asthma Attack

Here are a few things you should do after an attack has passed:

- Soothe your child by rubbing his back in slow rhythmic circles
- Give your child a drink of water or juice to help rinse out any bitter taste from the medicine
- Talk to your child about what just happened in a way that your child can understand
- Stay positive and praise your child for cooperating with you during the attack

To learn more about our Asthma, Diabetes, Smoking Cessation, and other quality programs at McLaren Health Plan, please call (888) 327-0671