



Living with Asthma

Asthma is a long-term problem, but it does not have to limit you. Learning all you can about asthma is the first step to taking charge of your asthma.

What is asthma?

Asthma causes swelling and redness in the airways that lead to your lungs. When asthma flares up, the airways tighten and become thinner. This keeps the air from passing through easily and makes it hard for you to breathe.

Asthma affects people in different ways. Some people have asthma attacks only during allergy season, or when they breathe in cold air, or when they exercise. Others have many bad attacks that send them to the doctor often.

Even if you have few asthma attacks, you still need to treat your asthma.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of asthma can be mild or severe. You may have mild attacks now and then, or you may have severe symptoms every day. Or you may have something in between. How often you have symptoms can also change. When you have asthma, you may:

- Wheeze or make a loud or soft whistling noise when you breathe in and out.
- Cough a lot.
- Feel tightness in your chest.
- Feel short of breath.
- Have trouble sleeping because of coughing or having hard time breathing.
- Quickly get tired during exercise.
- Your symptoms may be worse at night
- You can control the impact of asthma on your life with an action plan.

Important tips

- Educate yourself about asthma.
- Ask your doctor for information and for help in managing your asthma.
- Know your obstacles. What prevents you from following a plan? It may be that you have fears about asthma.
- Create an action plan. Your action plan says what medicines to take. Steps to treat your asthma attack.
- Monitor peak expiratory flow. Measure your peak expiratory flow. It is a way to keep track of your lung function. It can tell you when your lungs are getting worse before it is unsafe.
- Know your asthma triggers. A trigger can lead to an asthma attack. It can be smoke, allergens, medicines or stress.

- Take your asthma medicine. Taking your medicine is an important part of treatment. Find ways to remind yourself, like a note on your refrigerator.

To get more information about Magellan Complete Care please call us toll-free at 800-327-8613 or 800-424-1694 (TTY only). Or you can call Florida Medicaid Choice Counselors at 877-711-3662 or 866-467-4970 (TTY only).

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention