



For more health education information

CalViva Health members:

Call the Health Education Information Line at **1-800-804-6074 (TTY: 711)**.

www.CalVivaHealth.org

Take Control of Your Asthma

Get started now!

What can I do to help control my asthma?

- Know the symptoms and early warning signs of an asthma attack.
- Talk to your doctor and follow your treatment plan.
- Learn how to use your medicines and what to do during an asthma attack.
- Know what triggers your asthma and learn how to avoid or control it.
- Use a peak flow meter to measure and record how well your lungs are working. Ask your doctor to show you how to use it.
- Discuss with your doctor the right exercise plan for you.
- Eat healthy foods, get enough sleep and manage your stress.

This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Please always follow your health care provider's instructions.



What is asthma?

Asthma is a condition in the lungs and breathing tubes that makes it very hard to breathe. Anyone can get asthma at any age. There is no cure for asthma, but you can take steps to control it.

What are some symptoms of asthma?

You may have asthma if you have one or more of these symptoms:

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Tightness in the chest
- Shortness of breath



What starts an asthma attack?

An asthma attack happens when it becomes hard to breathe. If you have asthma, there are things that may bother your lungs and start an attack. Those are called asthma “triggers.” Not everyone has the same triggers. Some common triggers are:

- Cigarette smoke
- Pollen from flowers and plants
- Mold
- Certain foods
- Cold air
- Pests
- Lung infections
- High-level exercise
- Laughing/crying
- Dust
- Animal dander (skin flakes)
- Air freshener



What can I do to help control my asthma triggers?

Here are a few tips:

- If you are allergic to animal dander, it is best not to have pets.
- Clean and dry your showers, sinks and towels to avoid mold.
- Wash bed sheets and blankets weekly in hot water.
- Avoid smoking or cigarette smoke from other people.
- During cold weather, wear a scarf to protect your throat.
- Wash your hands often.
- Get a yearly flu shot.