

# Breathing Easier

A Special Newsletter for MVP Health Care<sup>®</sup> Members

Issue 2, 2024

## Know Your Triggers

An asthma trigger is a thing, activity, or condition that makes asthma worse. Knowing your triggers can help you avoid them, which may prevent some asthma attacks. Here are some ways to learn what your asthma triggers are.

- **Identify Possible Asthma Triggers**  
Common triggers include smoke, pollen, dust, pet fur, cold air, and exercise. When you're around something that triggers your symptoms, keep track of it. Over time, you may notice a pattern. Record triggers in your asthma diary or your asthma action plan.
- **Monitor Your Lung Function**  
Watch for things like being short of breath, having chest tightness, coughing, and wheezing. Also notice if symptoms wake you up at night or if you get tired quickly when you exercise.  
  
If your doctor recommends it, measure your peak expiratory flow (PEF), or "peak flow." A trigger may not always cause symptoms. But it can still narrow your bronchial tubes, which makes your lungs work harder. To identify triggers that don't always cause symptoms right away, you can measure your peak flow throughout the day.
- **Consider Allergy Testing**  
Skin or blood testing may be used to diagnose allergies to certain substances. Allergy testing may help identify triggers.
- **Tell Your Doctors**  
After you have found some things that may trigger your asthma, you and your doctor can make a plan for how to deal with them.



## Contact Us

**1-866-942-7966**  
Monday–Friday,  
8:30 am–5 pm  
TTY 711

## We Value Your Opinion

Please fill out a brief, anonymous survey at [mvp-listens.com](https://mvp-listens.com).

We will use this information to create a better experience for all our members. All responses are 100% confidential. The survey only takes a few minutes to complete.

MVP Health Care offers a health management program for members living with asthma. For more information or to see if you qualify, call 1-866-942-7966. The MVP Asthma Care Program is based on a collaborative guideline (including the New York State Department of Health, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, professional organizations, MVP, and other health plans from across the state) derived from the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Third Expert Report Clinical Guideline for the Diagnosis, Evaluation, and Management of Adults and Children with Asthma.

Information in this newsletter does not constitute medical advice. If you have questions about your health, talk to your doctor.

Health benefit plans are issued or administered by MVP Health Plan, Inc.; MVP Health Insurance Company; MVP Select Care, Inc.; and MVP Health Services Corp., operating subsidiaries of MVP Health Care, Inc. Not all plans available in all states and counties.

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# Be Prepared with an Asthma Action Plan

Each summer, MVP mails an Asthma Action Plan to school-age kids to have ready for the upcoming school year. The action plan should be completed with help from the doctor, with a copy going to school. This helps school staff understand how to help kids if they are experiencing an asthma attack.

An Asthma Action Plan is a helpful tool for adults as well. If you or a child need an action plan, call MVP Case Management at **1-866-942-7966**.

## Controlling Exercise-Induced Asthma

If you have exercise-induced asthma, talk with your doctor to see how your medicine can help. It may help reduce symptoms, especially in cold, dry weather.

### Your doctor may recommend:



Taking your long-term controller medicine as prescribed. This may mean taking it every day. Controller medicine can help reduce airway inflammation, and help reduce the overreaction of the airways that carry air to the lungs.



Using a quick-relief medicine about 10 to 30 minutes before you exercise. The effect of this medicine lasts several hours.

### Here are some other steps you can take to reduce symptoms:



Exercise indoors when air pollution and pollen levels are high.



Wear a mask or scarf wrapped around your nose and mouth if you are exercising in cold weather. This may help warm and moisten the air you breathe in.



Warm up before strenuous exercise. And slowly increase your activity. Always talk to your doctor about exercise that is right for you.



# How Can Gia Help You Today?

The Gia<sup>®</sup> by MVP mobile app is your virtual care partner when you need to speak with a doctor quickly or have a question about managing asthma.



Scan the code with the camera on your mobile device, or visit [mvphealthcare.com/GetGia](https://mvphealthcare.com/GetGia) to get the app.



## Lower Your Risk of Influenza (Flu) and Pneumonia

It is important to get vaccinated against the flu each year, and pneumonia as directed by your doctor.

Pneumonia is a lung infection that can cause mild to severe illness in people of all ages. Signs of it include coughing, fever, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, rapid breathing or shortness of breath, chills, or chest pain. Many pneumonia-related deaths are preventable through vaccination and appropriate treatment.

### Certain people are more likely to become ill with pneumonia:

- Adults age 65 or older
- Children younger than age five
- People under the age of 65 who have underlying medical conditions (like diabetes or HIV/AIDS)
- People ages 19–64 who smoke cigarettes
- People ages 19–64 who have asthma

### Simple steps for preventing the flu and pneumonia:

- Wash your hands regularly

- Clean hard surfaces that are touched often (like doorknobs and countertops)
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue, your elbow, or sleeve
- Limit your exposure to cigarette smoke
- Take steps to treat, control, and prevent conditions like diabetes and HIV/AIDS

### Get vaccinated:

- Several vaccines prevent infections that can cause pneumonia, including pneumococcal, pertussis (whooping cough), and seasonal flu vaccines

Staying up-to-date on COVID-19 and RSV vaccines is recommended to help you avoid serious illness. Check with your doctor to see if these vaccines are right for you.



# Living Well Programs from MVP

The MVP Health Promotions team is proud to offer a variety of free classes, discount programs, and vouchers throughout our service area. To learn more, find classes by you, or to register for any of our programs, check out [mvphealthcare.com/calendar](http://mvphealthcare.com/calendar).



## Health and Wellness or Prevention Information

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## Get Your Newsletter by Email

Good news! You can now receive this newsletter by secure message.

Make sure your communication preferences are up-to-date. Sign in to Gia at [my.mvphealthcare.com](http://my.mvphealthcare.com) and select the profile icon in the top right corner of your dashboard. Select *Profile and Settings* to change your communications preferences.

## Have a Health Question?

Our Health Library is your one-stop resource for the latest health information. Visit [mvphealthcare.com/HealthandWellness](http://mvphealthcare.com/HealthandWellness).



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