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HealthyView

living well with
chronic conditions

tips for a better relationship
with your doctor

five exercise trends to try

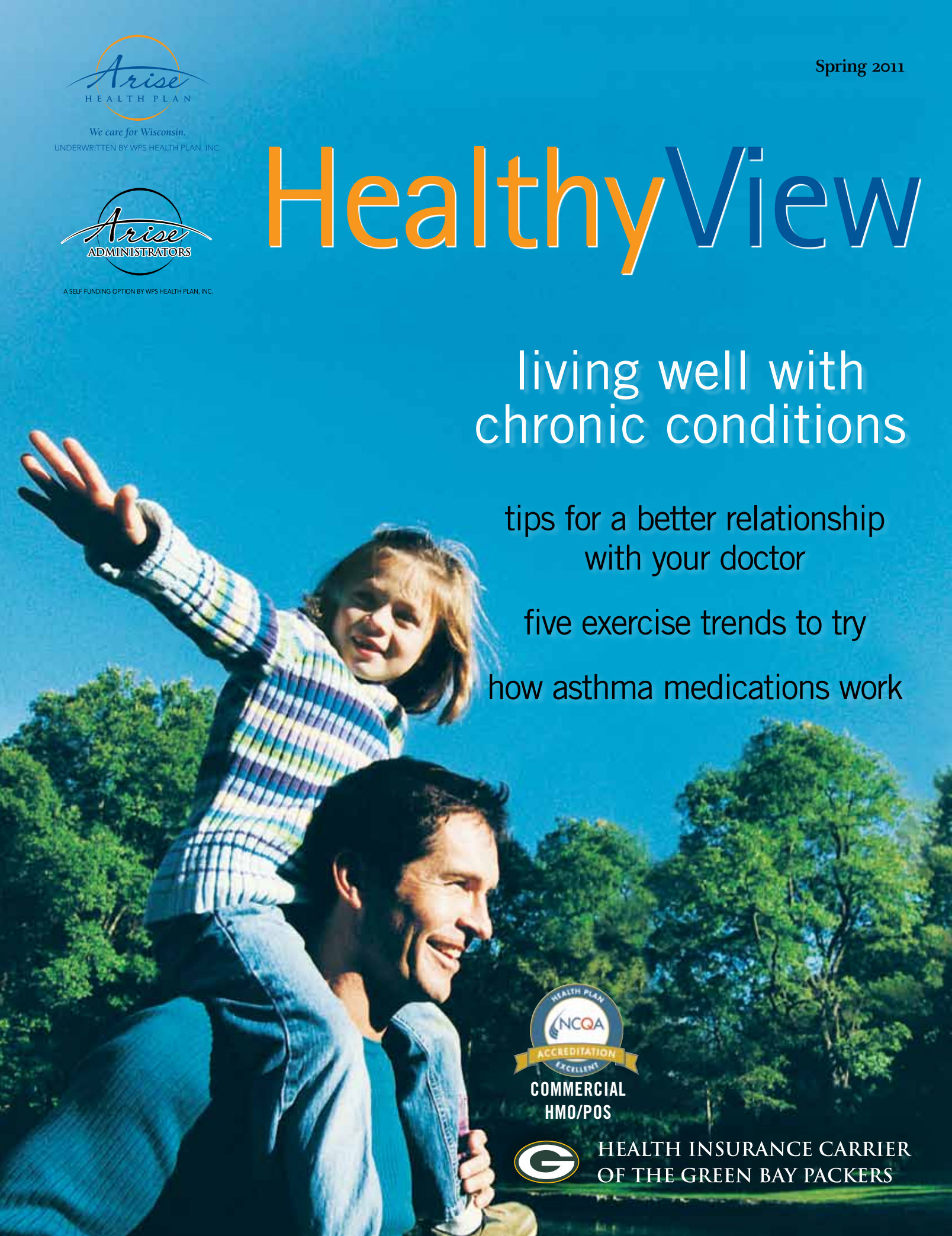
how asthma medications work



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HEALTH INSURANCE CARRIER
OF THE GREEN BAY PACKERS



workshop: living well with chronic conditions

Are you an adult with an ongoing health condition? At a Living Well with Chronic Conditions Workshop, you'll get the support you need to:

- Find practical ways to deal with pain and fatigue
- Learn and practice techniques to break the symptom cycle
- Discover better nutrition and exercise choices
- Understand how to evaluate new treatment choices
- Learn better ways to talk with your doctor and family about your health

Call the Aging & Disability Resource Center of Brown County at **920-448-4300** for more information or to register for a workshop. Cost is \$20 and includes the book "Living A Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions."

FEEL BETTER. BE IN CONTROL.

Put life back in your life! Register today for a Living Well with Chronic Conditions Workshop by calling **920-448-4300**.



tips for a better relationship with your doctor

Recent research suggests that doctors and patients may not always be on the same page. In one study, only 57 percent of hospitalized patients knew their diagnosis, but the doctors believed 77 percent understood their disease. Less than 20 percent of the patients knew their doctor's name, but the doctors guessed that 67 percent did.

And in another study, primary care physicians underestimated how many patients blamed themselves for their disease or wanted to be involved in making health care decisions.

How can you make sure your doctor understands you? As with any relationship, communication is key. Give more and get more with the following steps.

What You Can Give

- Concisely share your current symptoms, your health and family history, and any allergies.
- Write down or bring in all of your medications, including vitamins and supplements.
- If your physician does not already have them, bring any X-rays, test results or other relevant records to your appointments.
- Write down the questions you have for your doctor before your visit.
- Take notes during the appointment or bring a family member to do so.
- Be an active participant in your care so that you understand your condition and treatment,

and are prepared to be involved in decisions regarding your care. This is called "shared decision making."

- If you are uncomfortable with or unable to follow any recommendations your doctor makes, it is important to let him or her know.

What You Should Get

- A clear understanding of your health and your doctor's advice.
- Brochures or other written sources of information regarding common conditions or treatments.
- Your questions should be answered, and your physician should educate you well enough about your condition that you are prepared to be involved in shared decision making.
- Options regarding your care, and involve you in the decision making process.
- Appropriate follow-up care for your condition. This includes follow-up visits, as well as answers to questions between visits if your symptoms change or worsen, or if you have side effects from your medicines.
- Appropriate preventive care from your primary care provider.
- Some physicians have the ability to provide secure e-mail communications. In one study, secure e-mails with doctors helped patients keep diabetes and high blood pressure under control. ☺

ten ways to slash stroke risk

Strokes kill more than 150,000 Americans each year and leave many more disabled. They happen when the brain doesn't get enough blood, either because an artery burst or a clot blocked the blood flow.

Some risk factors, such as getting older and being male, can't be changed. But a new study in *The Lancet* found 10 that can—and together, they account for 90 percent of stroke risk. Here are the details:

- 1. High blood pressure.** Stroke risk is four to six times higher in those with hypertension. One in three adults has high blood pressure. Get yours checked regularly.
- 2. Diabetes.** High blood sugar damages blood vessels in the brain. People with diabetes have triple the stroke risk of those without the disease. Work with your doctor to manage your blood glucose.
- 3. Heart disease.** A misshapen heart or irregular heartbeat could contribute to stroke. To treat your condition, your doctor might recommend surgery or medication.
- 4. Abnormal cholesterol.** High levels of LDL or “bad” cholesterol and low levels of HDL or “good” cholesterol clog arteries. Have yours checked at least once every five years.
- 5. Waist-to-hip ratio.** Being heavy contributes to all four of the previous risk factors. To maintain a healthy weight, balance the number of calories you eat with your physical activity level.
- 6. Unhealthy diet.** Study participants who ate a Mediterranean diet—rich in fish and fruits—had the lowest stroke risk. Load up on fruits, veggies, whole grains, and lean proteins.
- 7. Not exercising.** Working out keeps your blood flowing and your heart strong. Aim for 30 minutes a day, five days a week. Even 10 minutes offers health benefits.
- 8. Smoking.** All forms of tobacco can cause blockages in the artery leading to the brain. Nicotine also raises blood pressure and thickens the blood. Kick the habit and your stroke risk drops immediately.
- 9. Drinking alcohol.** Binge drinking thins blood, increasing bleeding risk. Limit alcohol to one drink per day for women or two for men.
- 10. Stress.** Constant psychological pressure may damage artery walls. To calm down, try positive self-talk. Don't think, “I can't do this.” Tell yourself, “I'll do the best I can.” ☺



Garden Potato Salad



Low-fat cottage cheese is the secret to the dressing in this delicious, healthy mixture of vegetables and herbs.

Ingredients:

- 3 lb (about 6 large) potatoes, boiled in jackets, peeled and cut into ½-inch cubes
- 1 C chopped celery
- ½ C sliced green onion
- 2 T chopped parsley

- 1 C low-fat cottage cheese
- ¾ C skim milk
- 3 T lemon juice
- 2 T cider vinegar
- ½ t celery seed
- ½ t dill weed
- ½ t dry mustard
- ½ t white pepper

Directions:

- In a large bowl, place potatoes, celery, green onion, and parsley.
- Meanwhile, in a blender or food processor, blend cottage cheese, milk, lemon juice, vinegar, celery seed, dill weed, dry mustard, and white pepper until smooth. Chill for 1 hour.
- Pour chilled cottage cheese mixture over vegetables; mix well. Chill at least 30 minutes before serving.

Yield: 10 servings
Serving size: 1 cup

Each serving provides:
151 calories, 1 g total fat,
1 g saturated fat, 2 mg cholesterol, 118 mg sodium

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute/National Institutes of Health



as seen on TV: do shake weights and other gadgets work?

we want to hear from you!

We value your feedback and suggestions. How can we improve Arise Health Plan's services, the *Healthy View* newsletter, or our website? If you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please e-mail Jeanne Wittig, Director of Marketing, at jeanne.wittig@wpsic.com.



Visit the new redesigned Arise Health Plan website!

Can you shake, push, or rock your way to a better body? The makers of the newest fitness products would have you believe you can. But science doesn't always back their claims.

The Shake Weight

The claim: The Shake Weight promises dramatic results in just six minutes a day. First, shake the 2.5-pound plastic dumbbell. Then perform a traditional strength-training move. The result? Toned and defined chest, arms, and shoulders.

The theory: Vibrations from the device make the muscles work harder during exercise, building strength and power.

The research: Most studies of vibration training have been done using whole-body platforms. These may build

muscle strength and power under a trainer's guidance. But the Shake Weight is difficult to use properly, according to the American Council on Exercise. It's also too light to strengthen muscles, and the directions call for too few reps.

Try instead: For better muscle definition, try dynamic workouts that tone your whole body, like jumping rope or dancing.

Shape-Ups and Other Shoes

The claim: So-called toning shoes—like Skechers Shape-Ups and Reebok EasyTone—claim to strengthen your calves and hamstrings, burn more calories, improve your posture, and reduce joint stress and pain.

The theory: The rounded soles create an unstable surface, challenging your feet and legs.

The research: A study by researchers at the American Council on Exercise found no differences in heart rate or calorie burn with toning vs. regular shoes. You may use different muscles in these shoes than you would in regular shoes, which could improve balance. But each brand is different. What works for one person may cause injury to others, such as people with poor balance or with joint or tendon problems.


Try instead: To amp up your walking routine, carry hand weights. To tone your legs and butt, try squats.

The Perfect Push-Up

The claim: The Perfect Push-Up promises to strengthen your upper body in 10 workouts or less.

The theory: These handgrips rotate with your arm's natural movement while you do a push-up. This supposedly strengthens your chest, arms, back, and abs while reducing joint strain.

The bottom line: Overall, push-ups are an effective move. But one study, in the *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, didn't show muscles working harder with the handgrips. The instability may actually trigger wrist strain and increase the risk for injury.

Try instead: Start your push-ups on the floor or any stable surface. Move your hands closer together to target triceps and shoulders. 

five exercise trends to try

Whether you are looking for a new piece of exercise equipment for home or want to try something different at the gym, here are some new items that might help you keep things interesting. Just remember to always read safety instructions and check with your physician before trying new exercise equipment.

TRX Suspension Trainer

Developed by a U.S. Navy SEAL, the TRX Suspension Trainer is portable and versatile. It allows people of all strength and skill levels to perform hundreds of exercises that build power, strength, flexibility, balance, and mobility. It can be used in small spaces, outdoors, or in a gym. Kits range in price from \$180 to \$200. Go to www.fitnessanywhere.com for more information.

BOSU Balance Trainer

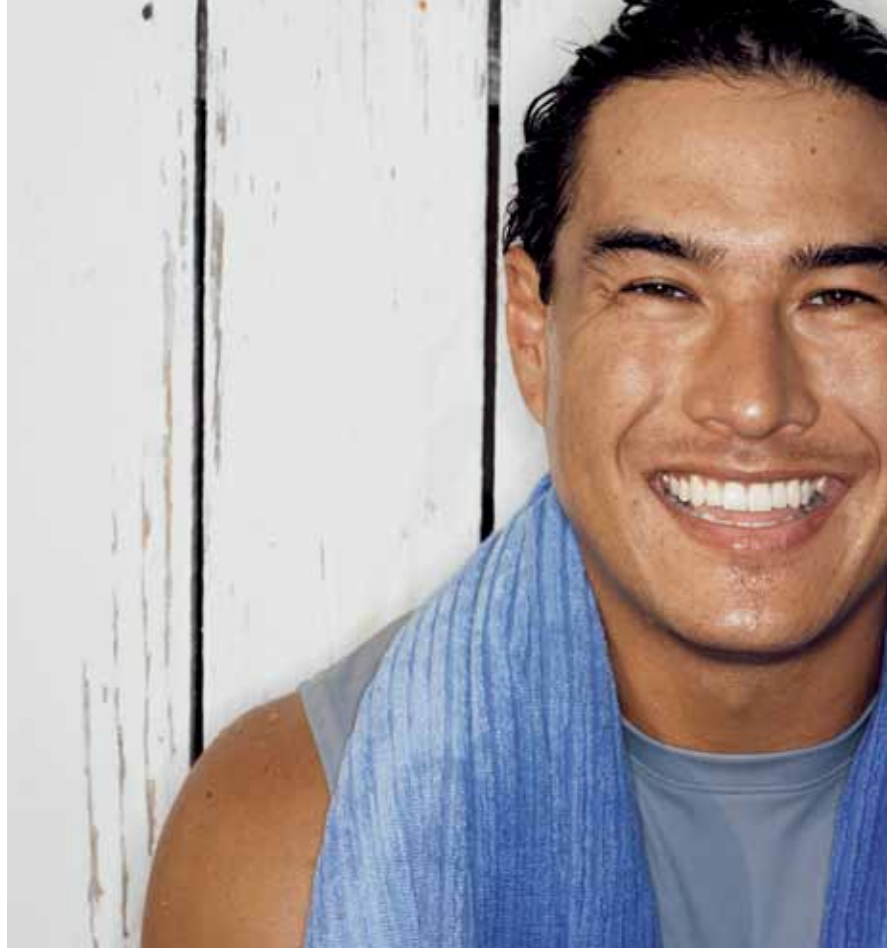
The BOSU balance trainer can be used for cardio step work, lunges, push-ups, squats, balance, and core work on either side of the trainer (flat or dome). Many fitness clubs offer classes using the BOSU or it can be a great add-on to your current routine. Balancing on the device activates your smaller muscles and makes the exercise more challenging. Home models are around \$100 and professional models are around \$120. Go to www.bosu.com for more information.

Weight Vest

The heavier you are, the harder your body has to work to perform an activity. You can use this fact to your advantage by adding a weighted vest to your walks, elliptical work, lunges, squats, and push-ups. Most vests are adjustable in one pound increments, all the way up to 80 pounds. Be sure to get the right-sized-vest based on your body size for a snug fit. Start adding weight slowly to get accustomed to it. Be sure that the weight is distributed evenly across the front and in back of the vest for ergonomic and safety reasons. Vests can be purchased from most sporting goods stores and range in price from \$40 to \$225, depending on weight and size.

Kettlebells

Kettlebells are seeing a rise in popularity. Studies from the American Council of Exercise show that including them into your workout helps focus on cardio and strength at the same time. Kettlebells range from 10 to 100 pounds and can be used to perform squats, deadlifts, rotational movement, rows, arm swings, and much more. Kettlebell-only gyms and classes are becoming more popular and you can also find home workout DVDs that feature kettlebells. Kettlebells range from \$25 to \$150 depending on weight, and can be found in most sporting goods stores.



Foam Rollers

Your fitness routine can include more than just resistance and cardio equipment. Foam rollers can improve flexibility, circulation, and postural alignment by kneading out the knots in your muscles. They are based on a type of massage called myofascial release. Foam rollers come in many sizes, shapes, and densities to accommodate various needs. Not only does it provide a way to improve your flexibility but serves as a core conditioning method. Check out Lawrence Biscontini's DVD *Total Conditioning on the Foam Roller* as a great guide. Price ranges from \$7 to \$40 depending on size and density. ☺

Contributed by Ashley Goddard, WPS Wellness

Text4baby

Are you pregnant or a new mom? If so, there's a new FREE service to help you out! Text4baby provides totally free text messages three times a week with info to help you through your pregnancy and baby's first year.

Text BABY (BEBE para Español) to 511411 to sign up!

To learn more, visit www.text4baby.org.
Powered by Voxiva. Text4baby is a free service of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition.





know what your asthma medications do

did you know?

Usually the quickest way to get medicine to your lungs is to breathe it in. That's why your inhaler is so handy. Most of the time, quick-relief medicine is taken with an inhaler. Your doctor can show you how to use one the right way. If you aren't sure what to do, don't be afraid to ask!

You know which asthma medicines you take. Do you know why? There are two main types of asthma medicine. One is called quick-relief medicine. The other is called controller medicine. Both types can help you feel better. They just do it in different ways. Here's how.

Phew! What a Relief

All kids with asthma need quick-relief medicine. It works like this:

- You take it at the first sign of trouble. When you start to cough or wheeze, or when your chest feels tight, it's time to use it.
- It makes the air tubes inside your lungs wider. This makes it easier for you to breathe. You end up feeling better fast!

Your doctor may have you take quick-relief medicine at other times, too. Some kids take it before they exercise. This helps keep asthma from acting up.

Got It Under Control

Many kids also need to use a controller medicine. Here's how it works:

- This kind of medicine is taken every day. You have to keep taking it even when you are feeling good. If you stop taking it, your asthma could get worse again.
- It makes the swelling inside the air tubes go down. This means the air tubes are less likely to be bothered by things that cause asthma. Then you're less likely to have an asthma attack.

■ It can take several days to a week for this medication to work to reduce swelling. If you only give this when your child is sick, it might not work right away. This is part of the reason your child needs to take this all the time.

Some controller medicines are inhaled. Others are taken by mouth as a pill or liquid. Your doctor will tell you how much to take and how often.

Uh-Oh! Time for a Change

Asthma symptoms tend to come and go. Everything may be going along fine. But your symptoms might change all of a sudden. Your medicine might not work as well as before. Or you might use your quick-relief medicine every day to stop asthma attacks. This means your asthma is getting worse. Speak up if this happens! Your doctor may need to change your treatment. You'll feel better—and have more fun—when your asthma is under control. 🌀

asthma camp for children—act now!

Kids ages 12 to 18 can enjoy activities while learning more about asthma, including ways to manage their condition. Act now to register your child for this summer camp by visiting www.asthmacamps.org/asthmacamps and clicking on "Find a Camp Near You."

correction

In the Winter issue of *Healthy View*, some readers noticed that our "Snowmobile Safety" article was accompanied by a photo of people snowmobiling without helmets. *Healthy View* regrets the use of that photo. Always wear a helmet when snowmobiling.

obtaining medical care: frequently asked questions

Q: How do I get care from a primary care practitioner or a specialist?

A: Arise Health Plan maintains a list of participating health care providers, including primary care practitioners (PCP), specialists, and behavioral health practitioners. For the most current list, go to www.WeCareForWisconsin.com and click on "Find A Doctor." You also may call an Arise Health Plan Member Services representative at (toll-free) 888-711-1444 or (local) 920-490-6900, **option 1**.

If a provider participates in our network, you simply make an appointment with him or her. You do not need a Pre-Service Authorization. For behavioral health care, your employer may require that you access the services through an employer-sponsored program. In this case, you may need a Pre-Service Authorization. Check with your human resources department to see if this applies to you.

Q: Do I need a Pre-Service Authorization to see a specialist?

A: You may seek care from a participating specialist without a Pre-Service Authorization.

If you need services from a specialist who is not in our plan or from a tertiary care specialist, a participating provider (PCP or specialist) must complete a Pre-Service Authorization requesting services from that nonparticipating specialist. This request will be reviewed by Arise Health Plan's medical director or authorized designee. The patient should not make the appointment until the request has been approved. Notification of the decision will be sent to you, your PCP, and the specialist you wish to see.

Q: How will bills be paid if my PCP refers my specialty care to a nonparticipating specialist?

A: When the need for specialty care arises, you should seek care from a participating specialist whenever possible.

If services from a nonparticipating specialist are necessary, the Pre-Service Authorization requirements will apply. Additional costs, such as usual and customary fee levels, apply to nonparticipating providers. This is a good reason to seek care from participating providers whenever possible.


Q: Who can request a Pre-Service Authorization?

A: A Pre-Service Authorization is required for all nonparticipating providers, tertiary care specialists and facilities.

An authorization request form must be submitted via mail or fax by the member's PCP or participating specialist. The request will be reviewed and a written response from Arise Health Plan will be sent to the member, the referring provider, and the referred-to provider.

Q: When do I need a Pre-Service Authorization?

A: You will need a Pre-Service Authorization for the following:

- An inpatient stay in a hospital, skilled nursing facility (nursing home), or birthing center
- Transplants
- Home health care
- Hospice care
- Durable medical equipment costing more than \$500, or any rentals
- Home infusions
- Prosthetics costing more than \$1,000
- New medical or biomedical technology
- New surgical methods or techniques
- Non-emergency ambulance transportation
- Genetic counseling, studies and testing
- Non-participating providers
- Tertiary care (services provided by specialized hospital providers that are often linked to medical schools and teaching hospitals) 



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reap the benefits of gardening

Growing your own fruits and vegetables can be a tremendously rewarding experience, for the newbie as well as the seasoned green thumb. In addition to providing you with fresh, delicious produce, working in the garden can also help you reduce stress, burn calories, or even be a source of extra income. Gardening can also be a way to provide for or share with others, and a means to introduce new foods into your diet.

The most important elements of a successful garden are adequate sunshine (six to eight hours a day), loose fertile soil, water, and planning. Taking some time to lay out your garden on paper before getting your hands dirty will help you get the most out of your space. Even if all you have is a small concrete patio or a city rooftop, it's possible to create a flourishing garden with lots of variety.

In most Wisconsin gardens you're likely to find tomatoes, lettuce, cabbage, beans, onions, peas, and cucumbers. These crops are proven performers in our notoriously short growing season. Less common but still great additions to the Midwest garden include eggplant, Swiss chard, rutabaga, leeks, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, artichokes, and spinach. It's your garden; get creative!

You can also think beyond the current growing season and plant perennials that will keep producing year after year. Blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, strawberries, rhubarb, asparagus, and grapes are all good choices for this climate. If you have the space, fruit trees such as apple, pear, peach, and cherry; or nut trees including walnut, hickory nut, almond, and hazelnut, can be excellent additions to your garden plans.

Your garden can be built up over the years as you gain experience and your plants start producing. There are many books available to help you plan and cultivate your garden. 

Contributed by Ashley Goddard, WPS Wellness



tips for gardening in small spaces

- Many plant varieties are specifically designed for containers. There are many books and other resources available to help you plan a fantastic container garden.
- Grow potatoes inside a stack of tires filled with dirt. Start with one tire and add more as the plants grow. Remove the tires one by one to harvest your crop.
- Coordinate with neighbors so you can each plant different crops and share your harvest.