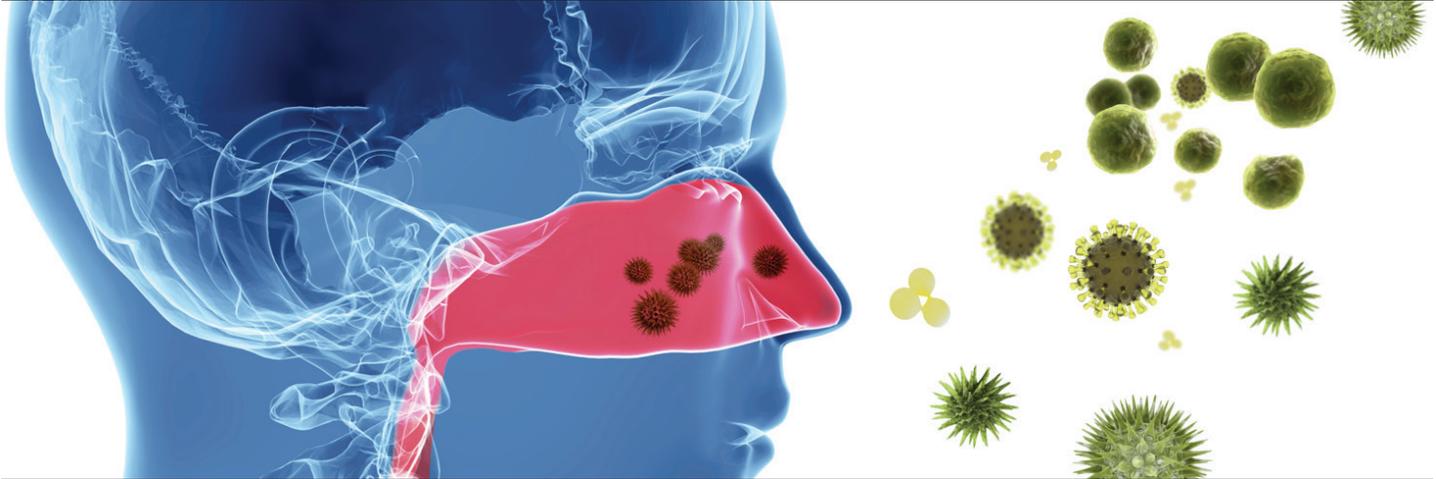


health awareness



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ALLERGIES AND ASTHMA

Spring means longer days, picnics, and time outdoors. But if you or your child has allergies or asthma, it's time to be on alert, too.

As many as 15 million people in the U.S. have food allergies. You'll want to work with your doctor to find out which foods give you problems and avoid them.

Most importantly, don't dig into a dish if you're not sure of its ingredients. Unless you can either read the box that the food came out of or talk to the person who specifically made the food themselves, it's best to avoid eating it.

If you're allergic to bees, wasps, and hornets, take these steps to steer clear of stings.

- Wear shoes when you walk outside.

- Try not to wear bright-colored clothes or perfume -- both can attract these bugs.
- Be careful when you drink from an open container, since insects can hide inside.

One good suggestion, only drink clear liquids out of a clear cup. That way, you can see if there's anything in the drink that doesn't belong there.

If you have seasonal allergies, pollen can make your nose runny, your eyes itchy, your throat scratchy, and your mood miserable. Try to stay indoors during the morning and early afternoon, when pollen levels tend to be highest, especially if you have asthma.

If it's a high-pollen count for a number of days, it can cause a severe asthma episode, and asthma can cause death.

To prevent symptoms, take your allergy medications right away, especially if you stopped taking them in the winter.

Advice from Allergy Specialists

Always carry your auto-injector. For some people, certain foods, medications, or insect stings can set off a severe, potentially fatal reaction called anaphylaxis.

Pack a survival kit. It's a good idea to carry diphenhydramine (Benadryl) along with your auto-injector. It won't replace an injection, but it can help.

Have backup medicine. When you go on vacation, bring enough medicine with you. You have to be more vigilant when you're traveling.

Have help on hand. Tell your friends and family exactly how to

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help you or your child before a reaction happens. Tell them where your auto-injector is, and teach them how to use it.

What Allergies Cause Asthma?

Inhaled Allergens. The most important allergens for people with allergic asthma appear to be those asthma triggers that are inhaled.

Hay fever or seasonal allergic rhinitis occurs when a person comes in contact with an allergen or a substance that he or she is sensitive to. Common inhaled allergens include:

- Animal dander (skin, saliva)
- Dust mites
- Cockroach particles
- Mold
- Pollen

Medical experts recommend that all people with allergies and asthma try to identify possible inhaled allergens that may trigger asthma symptoms.

Food allergies rarely cause asthma yet they can cause a severe life-threatening reaction. The most common foods associated with allergic symptoms are:

- Eggs
- Cow's milk
- Peanuts
- Tree nuts (such as almonds, pecans, walnuts)
- Soy
- Wheat

BENEFITS CORNER

Questions to ask at your doctor appointment for non emergency procedures

- Is the facility in-network or out-of-network?
- Are there other facilities I can use instead? If so, use anthem.com "Find a Doctor" to look for other facilities
- What upfront costs am I required to pay? Am I able to pay a partial payment right now?
- Will this be submitted for pre-authorization?

The network provider or facility is responsible for obtaining prior authorization before performing certain procedures or services.

D.M.E. and some prescriptions may require pre-authorization.

To determine which services and/or drugs require pre-authorization, contact the customer service department at (866) 698-0087.

Authorizations are determined based upon the CHP Plan Documents. Better to be safe than sorry. If you're not sure about it, call Anthem and ask.

If you still have questions please contact your CHP Benefits Administrator

- Fish
- Shrimp and other shellfish
- Food preservatives can also trigger asthma. Additives, such as sodium bisulfite, potassium bisulfite, sodium metabisulfite, potassium metabisulfite, and sodium sulfite, are commonly used in food processing or preparation and may be found in foods such as:
 - Dried fruits or vegetables
 - Potatoes (packaged and some prepared)
- Wine and beer
- Bottled lime or lemon juice
- Shrimp (fresh, frozen, or prepared)
- Pickled foods

If you suspect that certain foods may be the cause of your asthma, discuss this with your doctor. Allergy skin testing can be done to determine if you are allergic to these foods.

– From *webmd.com*