

Asthma: What is it?

Information to improve your health from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama

Asthma is a chronic lung condition involving inflamed or narrowing airways which can make it very hard to breathe. During an asthma attack, you may feel like your chest is constricting and experience severe coughing and/or wheezing. Triggers may include changes in air temperature, allergens, upper respiratory infections, various irritants in the environment and even exercise.

Your online Care Reminders show the health services you need – and puts you in charge.

Visit **AlabamaBlue.com**, log in to myBlueCross, and you will see care reminders related to various health conditions based on the information we receive on your claims from doctors' offices, hospitals and other providers.

These reminders serve to promote awareness and assist you by making sure you stay up to date with recommended health services related to your identified health conditions. These reminders are based on national guidelines and meant for information purposes only. Also, our health reminders are not a substitute for your healthcare.

Ways to help lessen the impact of allergy season:

It's easy to know when allergy season is here even before you have your first runny nose or watery eye. It's when you see the first sign of pollen. We've all seen it. You drive your car to work, park it in your normal parking space, and when you leave at the end of the day you wonder who parked their green car in your spot.

AlabamaBlue.com

This information is provided for general informational purposes. Information contained in this communication is not intended to replace professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified healthcare provider regarding your healthcare needs. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay seeking medical advice because of something you have read in this informational piece. Always check your benefits for coverage information and limitations.

Don't Let Spring Allergies Control You

Spring is a welcome relief after a cold winter. We can finally put away our coat, open our windows, and enjoy outside activities. But what isn't quite as welcoming are the unwanted springtime allergies.

Allergy symptoms appear when pollen is inhaled through your nose, mouth and nasal passages or when pollen comes into contact with your eyes or skin. Symptoms can include sneezing; watery eyes; itchy eyes, nose and throat; sore throat; coughing; headaches; and clear, watery nasal discharge and congestion.

In the spring, pollen is created when the weather warms up, and the trees, grasses and weeds begin budding and growing after being dormant in the winter.

It is almost impossible to avoid pollen altogether, but if you know ways to lessen its impact, you may actually make it through the spring with little to no reactions.

Ways to help lessen the impact of allergy season:

- Avoid being outdoors in the early morning, when pollen counts are at their highest.
- Check pollen counts before planning any outdoor activities.
- Keep your car windows up.
- Bathe indoor pets frequently if they go outside.
- Shower and wash your hair after an extended period outside.

If you suffer from seasonal allergies, Pollen.com has an email alert that will notify you when pollen counts are high in your area. You can also download their Allergy Alert app to your iPhone or Android.

