

Special Bulletin

For professional providers

April 28, 2023

May Is National Asthma And Allergy Awareness Month

Nearly 26 million people in the U.S. are living with asthma¹. In 2020, the disease resulted in 1.2 million emergency department visits and caused 4,145 deaths.²

For many with this condition, allergies and asthma often go hand in hand, according to the [American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology](#). In fact, allergic asthma is a type of asthma triggered by an allergy (for example, pollen or mold spores).

Despite the challenges posed by asthma, there are effective ways to manage and control the disease. [The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute \(NHLBI\)](#) recommends strategies to help people with asthma manage their condition by reducing:

- **Impairment** – The frequency and intensity of symptoms and functional limitations currently or recently experienced by a patient.
- **Risk** – The likelihood of future asthma attacks, progressive decline in lung function (or, for children, reduced lung growth), or medication side effects.

Achieving and maintaining asthma control requires providing appropriate medication, including those that treat allergies; addressing environmental factors that trigger worsening symptoms; helping patients learn self-management skills; and monitoring over the long term to assess control and adjust therapy accordingly.

Highmark Resources

The diagram on the right illustrates the steps involved in providing quality asthma care outlined in the **Asthma Quick Reference Guide**, which is available on the Provider Resource Center (PRC).



In addition, Highmark has an **Asthma Action Plan** on the PRC.

To access these resources, go to the PRC, select **EDUCATION/MANUALS**, click **Educational Resources – Member And Provider**, and then scroll down to the **PROVIDER TOOLS AND RESOURCES** section.

References

¹[National Center for Health Statistics](#). (2022). *2021 NHIS Adult Summary Health Statistics*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

²[National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey: 2020 National Summary Tables, table 11](#) and [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Asthma Data](#).

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of Western New York is a trade name of Highmark Western and Northeastern New York Inc., an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.

Highmark does not recommend particular treatments or health care services. This information is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. You should determine the appropriate treatment and follow-up with your patient. Coverage of services is subject to the terms of each member's benefit plan. Additionally, state laws and regulations governing health insurance, health plans and coverage may apply and will vary from state to state.