Staying active is a big part of a healthy lifestyle. But it’s not always easy to exercise if doing so brings on an asthma attack.

Exercise-induced asthma, or exercise-induced bronchoconstriction (EIB), can present symptoms like coughing, wheezing, and tightness in the chest within five to 20 minutes after starting to exercise.

The good news is that you can take steps to help lower your risk of having an exercise-induced asthma attack.

In fact, physical activity can help you build up a tolerance for exercise, which can help lower your risk of having asthma problems when you’re active.

Before you begin any type of exercise program, though, it’s important that you talk with your doctor first.

Once you’ve received the OK from your doctor, try these tips for safely exercising with asthma:

- Take your asthma medications before you start exercising. Also, allow yourself plenty of time to warm up before beginning any activity.
- Try doing low-intensity activities that are less likely than more intense ones to bring on an asthma attack. Swimming or walking are good choices. If you do want to try more vigorous activities—such as running—gradually increase your intensity over time.
- Rest when you need to.
- Avoid exercising when asthma triggers are present, such as cold air or pollution.
- Take time to cool down after you’ve done exercising. A warm bath or shower may also help.

Sources: American Council on Exercise; Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

Log in to your accessRMHP account to find helpful articles related to exercise-induced asthma, including a list of recommended sports and activities.
Know before you go

RMHP’s online cost estimator tool helps you save

Ever wanted to estimate your costs for medical services, procedures, and treatments? Now you can with RMHP’s newly enhanced cost estimator.

Compare costs from different facilities near you, determine your estimated total out-of-pocket costs (including copays, deductibles, and coinsurance) based on your benefits, and learn when special savings opportunities arise.

Get care, anywhere with MyDigitalMD

Now you can get answers to your common urgent health care questions on the go with the new MyDigitalMD app, available for download today at the App Store.

The free RMHP service can help you avoid the long waits and higher costs associated with urgent care centers and emergency rooms.

Text or video chat with Colorado-based, board-certified emergency medicine doctors to discuss minor health concerns, get necessary prescriptions, and receive follow-up instructions. For more information, visit MyDigitalMD.com.
Drink up
Stay hydrated during exercise

What’s the must-have accessory for every exerciser? A water bottle.

Your body needs plenty of fluid to get the most out of a workout. Water helps to cool you down from the inside out, transports nutrients, eliminates waste, and maintains blood pressure and circulation.

If you don’t drink enough liquid, you may notice that your muscles get tired, feel cramped, or you might lose energy and become uncoordinated. You could also end up with a case of heat exhaustion.

How much is enough? Each body has slightly different needs, but in general, you want to drink these amounts:

- Two hours before exercise: 17 to 20 ounces of fluid. Eight ounces is equal to one cup.
- During exercise: 7 to 10 ounces of fluid every 10 to 20 minutes.
- After exercise: 16 to 24 ounces of fluid for every pound of body weight lost. You might weigh yourself before and after exercise. Your weight should be about the same or a little less. If your weight drops more than one percent, then you’re starting to become dehydrated.

Don’t wait to drink until you’re thirsty. Thirst is not a good way to monitor fluid status.

Sources: American College of Sports Medicine; American Council on Exercise

Lip protection. When you’re applying sunscreen this summer, don’t forget about your lips. People who spend a lot of time outside without protecting their lips from the sun’s harmful rays are at increased risk for oral cancer. Prevention is as easy as applying (and reapplying) lip balm that contains SPF when you’re outside.

Keep teeth shining during the summer

From our valued partner, Delta Dental

RMHP in the community
RMHP will launch the Summer Kids Program (SKP) for a second consecutive summer to promote the health and well-being of children in need in the Grand Valley. The recipient of this year’s sponsorship is Ariel Clinical Services, a nonprofit Child Placement Agency and Adult Service Agency founded in 1994 in Grand Junction. Ariel provides a range of services for children, families, and adults, and serves hundreds in foster care statewide. RMHP is proud to support our community and such an outstanding organization.

August is Children’s Eye Health and Safety Month.

Keep an eye on your kids’ vision

School will soon be back in session, and it’s important for children to go through their health check routines, including basic physical and dental checkups. But did you know that the American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends making a vision screening part of kids’ back-to-school routines?

The reason: Good vision is key to school success. In fact, if your kids aren’t performing as you’d expect, trouble seeing may be to blame. As many as 60 percent of kids believed to have learning problems actually just have vision problems no one knows about, according to the American Optometric Association.

Vision screenings at school can help spot problems; however, they should not take the place of a complete eye exam.

RMHP is proud to partner with VSP. Learn more about the benefits of supplemental VSP plans at rmhp.org.
Know the numbers behind prescription drug abuse

Each year, Coloradans rely on prescription medications to help with illness, procedure recovery, and pain. Unfortunately, individuals who no longer need their medications, or who did not have a prescription in the first place, are abusing prescription drugs. Recent research shows that the problem is growing, and it’s possible that someone you know is affected by prescription drug abuse.

The Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Program of Peer Assistance Services, funded by the Colorado Office of Behavioral Health, compiled the following 2013 statistics to provide a clear picture of the problem facing the state:

- In 2013, 1.6 people died every day from unintentional drug poisoning.
- In 2013, 35 percent of the drug poisoning deaths in Colorado were due to opioid analgesics, or painkillers.
- In 2013, more people in Colorado died from poisoning due to opioid analgesics (295) than from drunk-driving related fatalities (134).
- According to the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use & Health, 5.08 percent of Coloradans reported using pain relievers in a nonmedical capacity in the past year.
- The 2013 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey revealed that one in seven Colorado high school students (13.6 percent) had taken a prescription medication without a doctor’s prescription one or more times during their life.

RMHP pharmacists are here to help you with questions about your current medications. Call **800-641-8921** today with any questions, or log in to **accessRMHP at rmhp.org** to find helpful articles relating to prescription drugs.

Source: Peer Assistance Services, Inc. (peerassistance services.org)