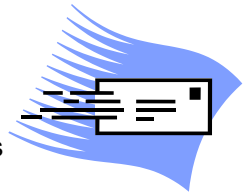




ManateeChoice Health Plan

Fast Facts



For more information, contact your Pharmacy Advocate, Dr. Chris Williams
941.748.4501 Ext. 6406 CWilliams@ManateeYourChoice.com

FAST FACTS is published by the Manatee Health Network (MHN) to provide Members with the opportunity to better understand medical conditions, various treatment options, and the impact of these options on member costs. **FAST FACTS** should be used in addition to the advice of your physicians, pharmacists, & other healthcare professionals.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Albuterol HFA (Rescue) Inhalers

Did you know that approximately 25 million Americans suffer from asthma? One of the most commonly used medications to treat an asthma attack is an inhaler. Asthma inhalers, or bronchodilators, work to widen the airways to help relieve asthma symptoms more quickly than traditional oral medications. The most common form of asthma inhalers are the short-acting beta-agonists including Proventil HFA, Ventolin HFA, Xopenex HFA, and ProAir. To the right is a list of the most common asthma triggers. Avoiding or reducing your exposure to these agents may decrease your chances of having an asthma attack.

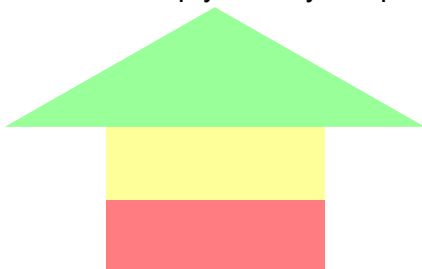
Cold, Flu, and Sinus Infections	Tobacco Smoke	Sinusitis
Perfumes	Heartburn	Cleaning Agents
Wood-burning Fireplaces	Stress, Anxiety, or Anger	Cold Air or Changes in Temperature or Humidity

Monitoring Your Asthma at Home

A peak flow meter is a device that helps to track your asthma control and measure how well your lungs are working. Using a peak flow meter can help you to recognize a flare-up before symptoms appear, show how well treatment is working, and help to decide when emergency care is necessary. Ask your doctor about getting the correct peak flow meter and using it correctly. Many are available over-the-counter and can be purchased at your local pharmacy.

Not sure if you're using your inhaler correctly?
Ask your doctor or pharmacist about proper inhaler usage! It's more important than you think!

Use your peak flow meter to find out your peak flow rate daily, when you are not having any asthma symptoms and you're feeling well. Your highest reading over the first 2-3 weeks is your personal best. Record your results in an asthma journal. Take this journal with you when you visit your doctor—it can help him or her to help you set your "peak flow zones."



Green (stable) zone: 80-100% of your personal best

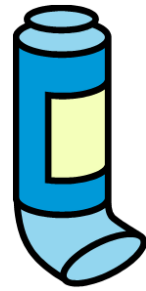
Yellow (caution) zone: 50-80% of your personal best

Red (danger) zone: Less than 50% of your personal best

After you and your doctor have found your zones, you can use your peak flow meter to help determine when you may need to use a rescue inhaler and when to seek medical help immediately. Talk to your doctor today about the benefits of using a peak flow meter and if this may be right for you.

Asthma Attacks: What You Need to Know

During an asthma attack, the airways become inflamed and swollen, and breathing may become difficult. While some attacks may pass quickly, others could be life-threatening, and it is important to know what steps to take if an attack occurs. Symptoms of an asthma attack include shortness of breath, chest tightness or pain, and cough or wheezing. If your rescue inhaler won't curb these symptoms, you may need to seek medical assistance immediately. If you use a peak flow meter to monitor your asthma, a low reading may also indicate an asthma attack. If your readings is 50-79% of your personal best, most doctors agree that it's time to use your rescue inhaler. You may need to seek emergency medical care if the attack does not go away and you are experiencing severe breathlessness or wheezing, especially at night or in the early morning. You may also need to seek care if you are straining your chest muscles to breathe, cannot speak more than short phrases due to shortness of breath, or have a low peak flow readings (often below 50) when you use a peak flow meter.



Ways to Save

If you are currently taking a non-preferred brand rescue inhaler medication, you may be able to save money by switching to a preferred brand prescription medication.



- Members save on brand name prescription drugs when they fill them at MHN Preferred Network Pharmacies. The MHN Preferred Network includes all Sweetbay Pharmacies throughout Florida, as well as Foster Drugs and Pelots Pharmacy.
- If you and your doctor decide that this preferred brand prescription medications is right for you, you can save \$10 or more each month, totaling as much as **\$240 per year in savings!**
- Check out the following chart to see your potential savings:

	MHN Preferred Pharmacy (Costs per Month)	Non-Preferred Pharmacy (Costs per Month)
Cost of Brand Proventil HFA or ProAir HFA	\$10	\$15
Cost of Brand Combivent	20% of Drug Price (Approximately \$29)	25% of Drug Price (Approximately \$37)
Cost of Brand Ventolin HFA or Xopenex HFA	\$30	\$30
If you Ventolin HFA or Xopenex HFA instead of Proventil HFA or ProAir HFA, it will cost you an extra...	\$360 (\$30 x 12 months) -\$120 (\$10 x 12 months) =\$240 per year	\$360 (\$30 x 12 months) -\$180 (\$15 x 12 months) =\$180 per year

Only your doctor can decide which medication is right for you. If you and your doctor decide to try a different medication, your doctor just needs to write (or call-in) a prescription for one of these products.

Manatee Health Disclaimer

The information in this newsletter is not a substitute for medical advice. It is for reference only and should not be used to determine treatment for your specific medical conditions-only a health care provider can do this. You should seek prompt medical care for any specific health issues and consult you physician regarding the use of over-the-counter products to treat any medical condition or consult your physician regarding the use of prescription or over-the-counter products to treat any medical condition or before starting any new diet, fitness, or supplement regimen.

Prescription Benefit Manager:
Prescription Solutions, Inc.
For: Manatee Health Network
Bradenton, Florida

Prepared by:
Pharmacy Healthcare Solutions, Inc.
P.O. Box 101632
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Editor: Melissa Sherer Krause, Pharm.D.
Contributors: Christopher K. Williams, Pharm. D.
Pharmacy Advocate
Ann Johnson, Pharm. D Candidate
Published July 2010