Trouble Paying for Meds? Reach Out for Options

When it’s hard to pay for prescription medication, it may be tempting to take a lower dose or even stop taking it all together. But if you have a chronic health problem, that can be trouble. It may cause a serious complication—or even a trip to the emergency room.

But there are better options. First, tell your doctor you can’t afford your medication. He or she may be able to switch your prescription to a generic drug or a less expensive brand-name medication. Your doctor may also be able to give you some free samples.

OTHER HELP

These resources may also help you afford your medication:

- **NeedyMeds** (needymeds.org) lists programs that help with medication and healthcare costs. Apply online to see if you’re eligible.
- **RxAssist** (rxassist.org) also provides a directory of programs that help with healthcare costs, including those for prescription drugs and medication copays. You can also find information about drug discount cards here.
- **Partnership for Prescription Assistance** (pparx.org) matches you with prescription assistance programs for which you may qualify. It draws from a database of more than 475 programs.
When Asthma Acts Up in the Spring

If you or your child has asthma, and it seems to get worse each spring, the culprit may be something blowing in the wind this time of year.

Spring is when more plant pollen and other allergens are in the air. And for many people, this shift in seasons brings on allergies that can last until summer begins. Sneezing, a runny nose, and itchy, watery eyes are some of the hallmark signs and symptoms.

Worse, those same seasonal allergies also trigger asthma flare-ups for many children and adults. That means more coughing, wheezing, and trouble breathing this time of year as well. And since most people with asthma also have at least one allergy, it’s a common problem. Even people who’ve never had allergies before can develop them for the first time as an adult.

Tell a doctor if your asthma or your child’s asthma acts up this time of year. Asthma attacks are serious—they can lead to a trip to the emergency room and can be life-threatening. So anytime asthma seems harder to control, it’s important to find out why. Your doctor may refer you or your child to a specialist for allergy skin tests or blood tests.
TAKING CONTROL OF ASTHMA AND ALLERGIES

While you may not be able to completely avoid spring allergens, you can reduce exposure to them. These steps may help you or your child feel better and manage asthma better:

> Be sure to take any asthma medications just as prescribed—even if you feel fine. And always keep a rescue inhaler handy.

> Ask a doctor about medication for allergy relief or prevention. One option might be allergy shots—also called immunotherapy.

> Check the pollen count before going outside. You can look this up online. You may want to schedule outdoor activities for a time when pollen counts are lower.

> Keep the windows in your car and home closed when a lot of allergens are in the air. Run the air conditioner to keep cool.

> Ask someone who isn’t allergic to mow your lawn, which can stir up pollen. If you must mow it yourself, cover your nose and mouth to reduce the amount of pollen you breathe in.

Sources: American Lung Association; U.S. National Library of Medicine

For current air quality, visit airnow.gov.

Pharmacy Corner:

Do you have difficulty using your inhaler with a spacer? Here is a link with video-instruction to help you use your spacer properly. Please refer to the instructions that came with your spacer or inhaler for proper use of your particular brand of inhaler.

Here’s where you’ll find the video:

healthjourneysupport.com/respiratory/using-an-mdi_with_spacer

KIDS’ CORNER:

Look for early warning signs of an asthma flare-up before your child has symptoms, such as coughing or wheezing. Some children show early warning signs hours prior to a flare-up. They may have changes in the way they look, their mood, or their breathing. Some even complain of “feeling funny.” Know your child’s early warning signs and be prepared with a reliever medication or call their doctor.

From kidshealth.org/en/parents/asthma-mgmt.html.
The content presented here is for your information only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, and it should not be used to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. Please consult your doctor if you have any questions or concerns. The information that is contained in this newsletter does not guarantee benefits. Member discounts are not considered a plan benefit. If you have questions or want to confirm your benefits, call Member Services at 800-538-5038.

If you have a Medicare Advantage® plan, call us toll-free at 855-442-9900, weekdays 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., closed Sunday. Outside of these hours of operation, please leave a message and your call will be returned within one business day. TTY users, please call 711. SelectHealth is an HMO plan sponsor with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in SelectHealth Advantage depends on contract renewal.

© 2019 SelectHealth. All rights reserved. 16984425 02/19

© Coffey Communications 2019

PLANT A TREE WITH ONE CLICK.
SIGN UP TO GO PAPERLESS!

OVER 5,800
That’s how many trees we planted at the Bibb County Preserve last year. We partnered with the Arbor Day Foundation to plant trees for members who signed up to go paperless.

Sign up to go paperless and we’ll plant a tree to help restore another forest.

Here’s how: Visit selecthealth.org/trees and log in to My Health.