

# Breathing Easier



Issue 2 | 2020

## Contact Us

**1-866-942-7966**

Monday–Friday,

8:30 am–5:00 pm

TTY: 1-800-662-1220

## We Value Your Opinion

Please fill out a brief, anonymous survey at **mvplistens.com**.

All responses are 100% confidential and help create a better experience.

MVP Health Care offers a health management program for members living with asthma. For more information or to see if you qualify, call **1-866-942-7966**. MVP's program is based on a collaborative guideline (including the NYSDOH, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, professional organizations, MVP and other health plans from across the state) derived from the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Third Expert Report Clinical Guideline for the Diagnosis, Evaluation, and Management of Adults and Children with Asthma.

Information in this newsletter does not constitute medical advice. If you have questions about your health, talk to your doctor.

Health benefit plans are issued or administered by MVP Health Plan, Inc.; MVP Health Insurance Company; MVP Select Care, Inc.; and MVP Health Services Corp., operating subsidiaries of MVP Health Care, Inc. Not all plans available in all states and counties.

## Monitoring Asthma Treatment

The severity of asthma can vary, and asthma often requires changes in your treatment to control it. Make sure that you are getting the proper treatment by always monitoring your asthma and talking with your doctor.

### Symptoms

Know the symptoms of poorly controlled asthma—wheezing, cough, chest tightness, or shortness of breath. Having a written record of what to do during an asthma attack (using your asthma action plan) will give you guidance if your or your child's asthma starts to get out of control.

Your doctor should periodically assess your asthma. He or she will ask how you have been doing since your last visit. Your doctor will ask about daytime asthma symptoms, nighttime awakenings, and symptoms early in the morning that do not get better with medicine.

### Lung Function

In asthma, how severe your symptoms are does not always match the results of your lung function tests. Some people will not notice severe symptoms until their lung function is very bad. For this reason, you should consider testing your lung function from time to time.

**Spirometry** is a lung function test that measures how much and how quickly you can move air out of your lungs. You breathe into a mouthpiece attached to a machine called a spirometer. The machine records your results.

Spirometry can measure many different things about the way you breathe. These

include how much air you can exhale, how much air you can breathe in and out in one minute, and the amount of air left in your lungs after a normal exhale.

A **peak flow meter** lets you monitor your lung function at home. It records the airflow as you blow out as hard and fast as possible. The number recorded is the peak flow achieved.

Peak flow monitoring can be used long term to monitor the changes in how well your lungs function. It can help you know in advance when you may have a sudden increase in your symptoms (asthma attack), so you can start treatment.

### Quality of Life

Your quality of life is key to measuring the success of asthma therapy. This includes how often you or your child has missed work or school because of asthma, if you're able to do normal activities, and if you're sleeping well.

### History of asthma attacks

Asthma attacks usually happen after exposure to substances that cause inflammation in the airways (triggers), such as animal dander, viral infections, and pollen. How often you have episodes, how severe they are, and knowing what triggers them can help your doctor determine the best treatment.

# Using a Metered-Dose Inhaler and Mask Spacer

A spacer is a chamber that can be attached to a metered-dose inhaler (MDI). The spacer chamber may have a one-way valve that allows the medicine to be held in the chamber before it is inhaled. This way you can inhale the medicine in one or many breaths, depending on your ability. Spacers are often used by children who have difficulty using a metered-dose inhaler correctly.

## A spacer:

- Helps prevent getting a yeast infection in your mouth or making your voice sound hoarse.
- Increases the amount of medicine delivered to your airways, even if you have difficulty using your inhaler.
- Reduces the amount of medicine swallowed, which minimizes side effects.

A spacer may be used with an inhaler, especially one that contains corticosteroids. Do not use a dry powder inhaler (DPI) with a spacer. Be sure to talk with the doctor to be sure that you or your child know how to use the MDI and mask spacer correctly.



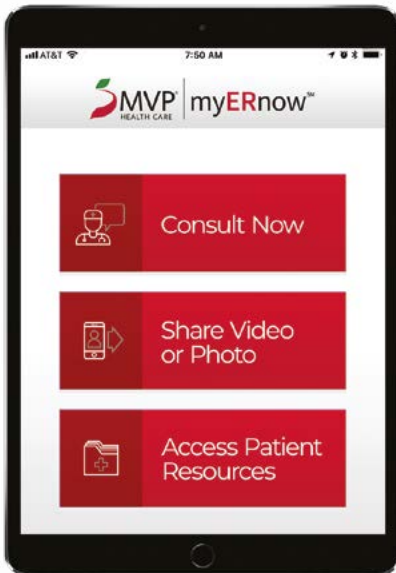
## Protect yourself from COVID-19

People living with moderate to severe asthma are at a higher risk for getting COVID-19 (coronavirus). Be sure to follow everyday precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention to avoid being exposed to COVID-19. This includes wearing a face mask when in public, washing hands often, keeping a safe space between yourself and others, and following your asthma action plan.



# Access to the Care You Need. Anytime. Anywhere.

MVP offers telemedicine services to meet your needs and preferences, on your schedule. Choose from two services—both with \$0 co-pays.\*



## myERnow<sup>SM</sup> 24/7 Emergency Care

A highly trained ER team can diagnose and help you with ordering tests, prescriptions, referrals, and follow up care for a range of emergency care needs, such as:

- Flu-like symptoms, including COVID-19 (coronavirus)
- Sprains, strains, and minor fractures
- Cuts and scrapes
- Tick/insect bites, rashes, and other skin infections

**Call 1-833-myERnow** (1-833-693-7669) (TTY: 711) or **visit myERnow.com**.

## myVisitNow<sup>®</sup>

Get expert diagnosis and prescriptions, if appropriate, for a variety of non-emergency care situations and diagnoses, including:

- 24/7 online doctor visits for a range of needs, including sinusitis, upper respiratory infections/flu, pharyngitis, urinary tract infections (UTI), bronchitis, conjunctivitis, allergies, and more
- Self-scheduled appointments for behavioral health, nutrition and lactation support

**Online visits are available, using a smartphone, tablet, or computer with a webcam.**

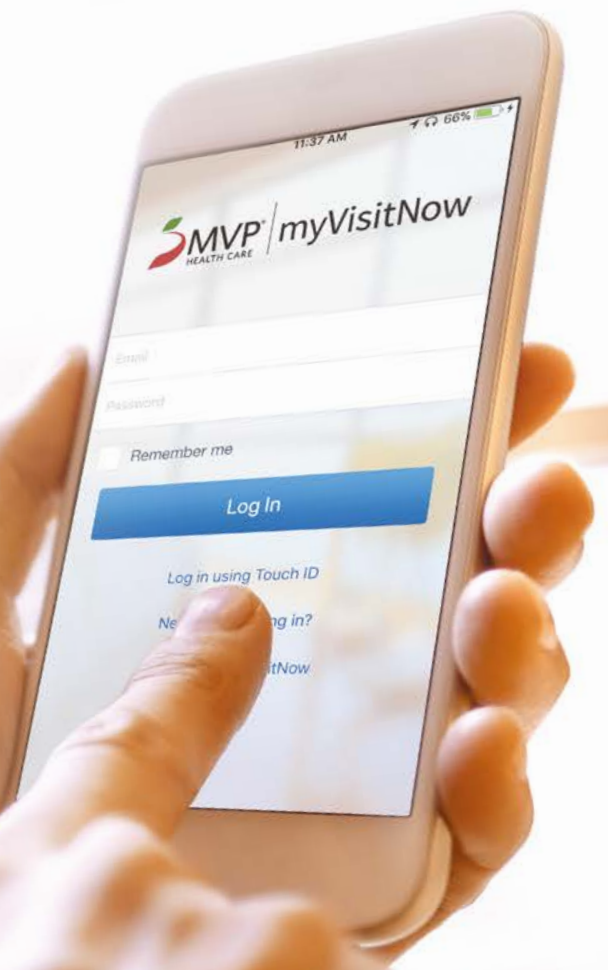
Visit **myVisitNow.com** for more information.

**If you have a life-threatening medical emergency, call 911 immediately.**

\*If you are a self-funded plan participant, check with your employer to see if you have this benefit. MVP SmartFund MSA® members are only eligible for myVisitNow® which is subject to the deductible.

**myVisitNow** from MVP Health Care is powered by American Well and is not included in all plans. Regulatory restrictions may apply.

**myERnow** is powered by United Concierge Medicine.



# LivingWell



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## Go online and take charge of your health.

The MVP Healthwise® Knowledgebase is your one-stop resource for the latest health information.

Visit [mvphealthcare.com](http://mvphealthcare.com) and select *Members*, then *Health & Wellness*.

## Reduce Your Risk of the Flu and Pneumonia

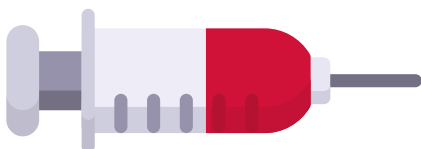
It is important to get vaccinated against the flu each year, and pneumonia as directed by your doctor. Pneumonia is a lung infection that can cause mild to severe illness in people of all ages. Signs of it include coughing, fever, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, rapid breathing or shortness of breath, chills, or chest pain. Many pneumonia-related deaths are preventable through vaccination and appropriate treatment.

### Certain people are more likely to become ill with pneumonia:

- Adults age 65 or older
- Children younger than age five
- People under the age of 65 who have underlying medical conditions (like diabetes or HIV/AIDS)
- People ages 19–64 who smoke cigarettes
- People ages 19–64 who have asthma

### Simple steps to preventing the flu and pneumonia:

- Wash your hands regularly
- Clean hard surfaces that are touched often (like doorknobs and countertops)
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue, your elbow, or sleeve
- Limit your exposure to cigarette smoke
- Take steps to treat, control, and prevent conditions like diabetes and HIV/AIDS



**Get vaccinated.** Several vaccines prevent infections that can cause pneumonia, including Pneumococcal, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), Pertussis (whooping cough) and seasonal influenza (flu) vaccines. Talk to your doctor for more information.