



Wellness Newsletter

May 2017

Welcome to Spring! As the flowers bloom so do allergy symptoms. May is Asthma and Allergy awareness month, do you know what your allergies are? Do you have a plan to handle your allergies? Per the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America...

“NEW SURVEY FINDS MOST AMERICANS SPEND LITTLE TIME THINKING ABOUT THEIR SEASONAL ALLERGIES UNTIL THEY HAVE SYMPTOMS”

February 1, 2016, WASHINGTON, D.C. – A new online survey by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) and Merck finds that many Americans with seasonal allergies think most about managing their seasonal allergies only when they experience symptoms or at the start of allergy season. In response to insights from the survey, AAFA has teamed with Merck to launch Allergy PREP, an online resource to help patients with seasonal allergies prepare in advance of their allergy season.



The survey—which included 1,083 adults (ages 18-65) who have been diagnosed with seasonal allergies and 534 parents of children (ages 5-17) with seasonal allergies—found that, among respondents:

- **Close to two-in-three** adults with seasonal allergies felt confident that they had an idea about the season in which their allergies would be the most severe, but **over three-in-four** reported that they thought most about managing their seasonal allergies only when they experienced symptoms or at the start of allergy season.
- **38 percent** of adults with seasonal allergies felt that their symptoms were becoming more severe.
- **Almost three out of four (74%)** allergy sufferers had an idea what over-the-counter treatment options were available, but many didn't know what prescriptions were available (**55%**), what their allergy triggers were (**37%**), or how to help their allergy symptoms (**36%**).
- **Only 47%** of adults surveyed visited a doctor for advice or got a prescription for an allergy treatment from a doctor before allergy season.
- A large majority of parents of children with seasonal allergies (**nearly nine-in-ten parents**) worried about a severe allergy season more than their child's report card.

Allergy PREP (Prepare, REview, Plan), allergyprep.aafa.org, encourages people with seasonal allergies to plan ahead and to:

- Prepare by educating themselves about the cause of seasonal allergy symptoms
- Review their seasonal allergy strategy
- Plan an appointment with a doctor

To learn more about how you can prepare in advance of your allergy season, visit allergyprep.aafa.org. The Allergy PREP site was developed in collaboration between AAFA and Merck & Co., Inc.

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), a not-for-profit organization founded in 1953, is the leading patient organization for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions. AAFA provides practical information, community based services and support through a national network of chapters and support groups. AAFA develops health education, organizes state and national advocacy efforts and funds research to find better treatments and cures. To learn more about AAFA, visit www.aafa.org.

Reference: <http://www.aafa.org/page/AllergyPREP.aspx>

Asthma Action Plan - One of the smartest things you can do if you or your child has asthma is to develop an Asthma Action Plan with your physician. An asthma action plan contains information about what medicines your doctor has prescribed and when and how you should take them. It also describes what to do if you have an asthma emergency.

Like a traffic light, the Asthma Action Plan has three colored zones: green, yellow and red. These zones help guide patients and caregivers by providing instructions for medication use and dosage at the onset of particular symptoms. The green section means symptoms are well controlled, the yellow section means your symptoms are getting worse and you may need to increase medication, and the red section signifies symptoms that require urgent medical attention.

Asthma & Spring Allergies

The spring season brings a number of enjoyable elements including an increase in sunshine, flowers and warm weather. Unfortunately, spring's beauty can be overshadowed by the presence of various allergy triggers, such as pollen. For those living with respiratory conditions, such as asthma, spring allergy triggers may cause symptoms to worsen. However, there are several steps you can take to help manage your asthma while still enjoying the outdoors.

1. **Identify your triggers** – In order to control your asthma, it's important to know what allergens may trigger your symptoms and how to limit your exposure.
2. **Monitor your outdoor air quality** – When planning to go outside, remember to first scope out the environment and be aware of any obvious triggers. Remember that the outdoor air quality can be especially bothersome for those with asthma.
3. **Treat your allergy symptoms early** – By starting your spring allergy medicine at the onset of the season, you're more likely to have control over your allergy and asthma symptoms.
4. **Shut out pollen** – One easy way to prevent pollen from entering your home is to keep windows and doors closed. Use an air filter and clean it regularly or run the air conditioner and change the filter often.
5. **Do most of your exercising indoors** – And when you do participate in physical activities outdoors, remember to use your asthma medications before you go.
6. **Shower often** – Allergens can stick to your body and clothing. It's important to shower and wash your clothes after being outside in order to avoid transferring pollen indoors.

Visit allergyprep.aafa.org for more tips to help with a plan to control asthma at home, work and school.



May Is National Arthritis Awareness Month

The Arthritis Foundation's Mission and Vision focus on improving quality of life, increasing access to care, and helping with advancements in science and community connections. Their website provides a variety of information including the month of May as National Arthritis Awareness Month. Per the Arthritis Foundation, arthritis is a disease that impacts more than 50 million Americans, making it the number one cause of disability in the country, affecting 1 in every 5 adults, 300,000 children and countless families are affected by arthritis.

“The Arthritis Foundation is leading the way to conquer arthritis and its effects through our advocacy efforts at the state level and on Capitol Hill, our cutting-edge scientific research, and our tools and resources that help you live your best life.”

According to the Arthritis Foundation's website “The first steps in conquering arthritis are learning the facts, understanding your condition and knowing that help is by your side.”

- Nearly 53 million adults have doctor-diagnosed arthritis; that number is expected to grow to 67 million by 2030.
- Almost 300,000 babies, kids and teens have arthritis or a rheumatic condition.
- Arthritis is the nation's No. 1 cause of disability.
- Working-age men and women (ages 18 to 64) with arthritis are less likely to be employed than those of the same age without arthritis.
- 1/3 of working-age people with arthritis have limitations in their ability to work, the type of work they can do or whether they can work part time or full time.
- People with osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis –two major kinds of arthritis – miss a combined 172 million workdays every year.
- Arthritis and related conditions account for more than \$156 billion annually in lost wages and medical expenses.
- There are nearly 1 million hospitalizations each year due to arthritis.
- 57% of adults with heart disease have arthritis.
- 52% of adults with diabetes have arthritis.
- 44% of adults with high blood pressure have arthritis.
- 36% of adults who are obese have arthritis.
- 1/3 of adults with arthritis age 45 and older have either anxiety or depression.

Resources That Can Help:

Learn more about the different [types of arthritis](#) on the Arthritis Foundation website

Check out our resources to help you find ways to [live better with arthritis](#)

Learn more about the [tools and resources](#) we offer to help you manage your disease

[Sign up for our e-newsletters](#) to stay updated on the latest news and information related to arthritis

Reference: <http://blog.arthritis.org/news/arthritis-awareness-month/>



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The time is now for employers to help improve the health of their most valuable resource – employees. With our expertise in healthcare, we at Savage and Associates can help you design and administer a worksite wellness program appropriate for your company's size and budget. Helping employees have the tools to live a healthy lifestyle is imperative. Let Savage help you create a culture of wellness and prevention, promoting personal responsibility.

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