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Take control of your asthma

What asthma feels like

If you have asthma, you likely know it. It's a condition where your airways tighten up and narrow, making it hard to move air in and out of your lungs.

So you may have:

- Trouble breathing
- A whistle-like wheeze
- A nagging cough
- Soreness or tightening in your chest

Your doctor can help you figure out if you have asthma. And you can work on an action plan together to keep your lungs healthy.

Our furry friends with long hair are no more likely to cause allergies than those with short hair.

Keep a symptoms journal

You may need to take a few tests for your doctor to know if you have asthma. Even then, the best clue is how well you describe your symptoms at your visit. It's a good idea to keep an asthma journal so you don't forget. Write down:

- The symptom, and when and where you were when it happened
- What could have triggered it
- How long it lasted

It only takes a minute. But it can help you and your doctor put together a serious attack plan!

Know your triggers

A trigger is something that causes your asthma to flare up. For some, it's cats. For others, it's exercise. Other triggers:

- Dust mites
- Mold
- Pet dander (dead skin)
- Smoke
- Cockroach droppings
- Chemicals in the air

Avoiding an attack starts with knowing what can cause it. That's why tracking those pesky triggers is so important!

More ways to stay prepared

Even if your asthma is under control, you should arm yourself against future attack. Some tips:

- **Label your medicine:** Use tags like "daily" or "wheezing" so you know which to grab at a glance.
- **Always carry your inhaler:** Keep a spare at your work, school or gym too.
- **Wear a medical alert bracelet:** More so if you've already had severe attacks.

Find more ways to manage your asthma. Visit the Aetna IntelliHealth® website at www.intelihealth.com.

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