

Breath'n Easy Buzz

from Heritage Valley Health System's Community Health Services Pediatric Asthma Program

Lazy Days of Summer

Yeah! Summer is finally here! No schedules! You have waited all winter and spring for free time to have summer fun. Instead of staying indoors on the couch in front of a TV, get up and move! Plan activities that are outdoors and full of fun and adventure.

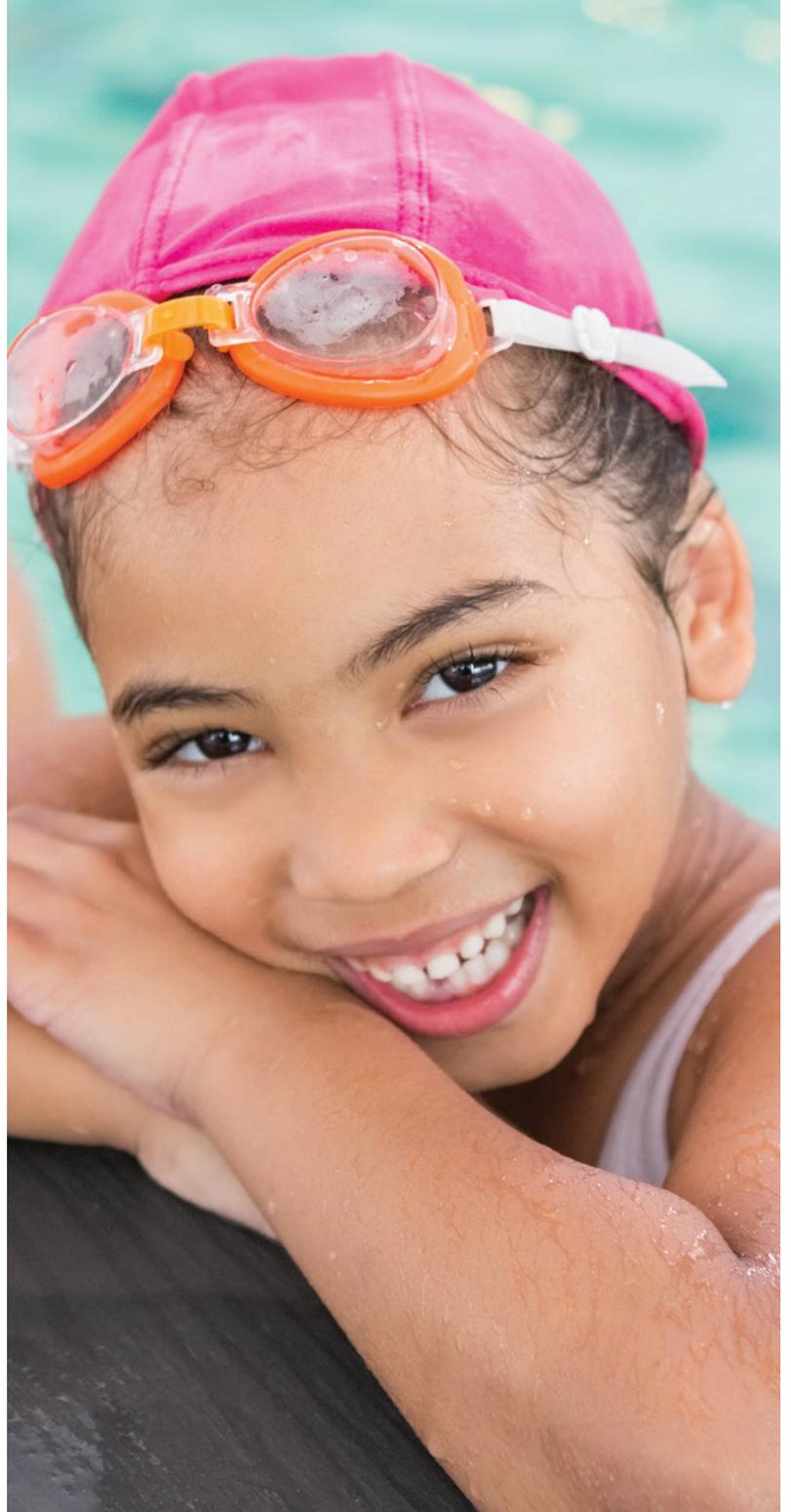
Here are some ideas of fun things to do on a summer day:

- Plan a bike ride with your family and friends. Always remember to wear a helmet for safety.
- Make a chore list to help your parents. They will be so surprised!
- Plant a small garden to watch things grow.
- Go swimming.
- Exercise everyday - play kickball, dodge ball or badminton.
- Plan a scavenger hunt.
- Go "camping" in your back yard.
- Watch the stars at night and learn about "astronomy".

Be careful outdoors as sudden changes in weather during the summer can trigger an asthma attack. On windy days, pollen can spread and mold can be in the air, which can affect those who have grass, tree pollen and mold allergies. Last, but not least, think of ways to manage your asthma. Always take your inhaler with you if you go on vacation. Be sure to check your medicines are not expired.



Learn all you can about asthma and how to stay healthy and fit!



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Ask Your Nurse O&A



Q. Is there a difference in asthma for young children compared to adults?

A. Yes, infants and toddlers have a much smaller airway than older children and

adults. Their airways are so small that even small amounts of swelling of the airway lining can block the flow of air. This swelling can be caused by viral infections, tightened airways or increased mucus. The first episode of asthma in young children is often triggered by viral respiratory infections.

- * Approximately 50% of children with asthma “outgrow” their asthma once they reach or pass through adolescence, although it may return when they are adults.
- * Children who live in homes with parents that smoke are more susceptible to ear infections and chronic respiratory illnesses such as asthma.

Information on Air Cleaners

Before you buy an air cleaner, you may want to check out these web sites:

- * Environmental Protection Agency at www.epa.gov and search: Air Cleaners and Air Filters.
- * Mayo Clinic at www.mayoclinic.com and search: Allergy Proof your Home.

Allergy Sniffles and Sneezes

Even if you have never before had allergies, they can suddenly strike at any age and any time of year. It might be a good idea to visit your health care provider or a board-certified allergist if these unwanted signs go together with your sniffles and sneezes.

Allergic Shiner: Dark circles under the eyes, which are due to swelling and discoloration from congestion of small blood vessels beneath the skin in the delicate eye area.

Allergic (adenoidal) Face: Nasal allergies may cause swelling of the adenoids (lymph tissue that lines the back of the throat and extends behind the nose). This results in a tired and droopy facial appearance.

Nasal Crease: This line appears across the bridge of the nose. It is the result of rubbing the nose upward to relieve nasal congestion and itching.

Mouth Breathing: Cases of allergic rhinitis in which severe nasal congestion occurs can result in chronic mouth breathing.



Allergy Quiz

1. Allergies almost always start during childhood.

False. Allergies can begin at any age. They can flare up at any time.

2. Over the counter medications may help with allergic reactions.

True. Antihistamines and decongestants can help bring allergy relief.

3. It takes months or sometimes years for allergy shots to be effective.

False. Most people begin to feel some relief quickly.

4. Allergies go away after the first frost.

False. Other allergens like mold, dust mites, animal dander and feathers stay around all year.

5. Allergies are the primary cause of an asthma flare-up.

True. About 70% of people with asthma also have environmental allergies. These include, pollen, mold, animal dander (dead skin flakes), house dust mites, and cockroach droppings.

Other substances, called irritants, can also aggravate asthma. These substances do not cause an allergic reaction, but irritate the airway. They include air pollutants such as, tobacco smoke, wood smoke, and chemicals in the air and ozone; occupational exposure to gases or fumes; strong odors such as perfumes, household cleaners, cooking fumes, and paints.

Some more irritants include other airborne particles such as, coal dust or talcum powder; and weather conditions such as changes in temperature and humidity, barometric pressure, or strong winds.



WHO IS THE FIRST TO SWIM TO THE SHORE?

