

# Achieve

A Newsletter  
for AvMed  
Members

## ▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH ASTHMA

### These mistakes could be triggering asthma symptoms

If you or your loved one is experiencing asthma symptoms more than twice a week, you may need to make some changes. Together with your doctor, you can review your medication and your asthma triggers. But also consider whether you're making one of these asthma-management mistakes.

**1. Not checking weather and air quality.** Weather conditions, smog, and pollen can trigger asthma symptoms. Tracking your symptoms with the weather and air quality can help you pinpoint your triggers so you can take precautions.

**2. Opening windows all the time.** If it's a bad air-quality day, keep your windows closed. Keep your car windows closed too, especially if you're sitting in traffic. Car fumes can affect your breathing, possibly causing an asthma attack.

**3. Ignoring pest problems.** Pests like cockroaches and mice can trigger asthma symptoms. Prevent pests from getting in by sealing leaks and cracks and keeping food stored safely.

If you notice pests, try traps and other non-toxic methods first.

**4. Using harsh cleaning products.** Keeping your home clean can keep asthma symptoms at bay. But use non-toxic cleaning products without fragrances. You'll also want a vacuum with a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filter to control dust. Keep rooms well ventilated while cleaning by turning on fans or opening windows (if the air quality is good!).



▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH ASTHMA

Ask the Asthma Doctor

**Q** What are some early signs of an asthma flare-up?

**A** Kids with asthma, like other kids, feel fine most of the time, especially if they take their medications. But every now and then, your child may experience a flare-up — also known as an asthma attack or an exacerbation.

“Typically, most asthma attacks begin with an upper-respiratory virus or allergy symptoms. These are the most common triggers,” explains Theresa Guilbert, M.D. She’s a spokesperson for the American Academy of Pediatrics. That might be just an ordinary cold, but for kids with asthma, it can mean trouble.

Other asthma triggers could include:

- Poor air quality from pollution and smog
- Cigarette smoke
- Scented cleaning products
- Changes in the weather

If caught early, you can treat an asthma attack before it becomes an emergency situation. Be on the lookout for these early warning signs:

- Chest tightness
- Headache
- Itchy or sore throat
- Itchy or watery eyes
- Mild coughing

**Case Manager Spotlight**

**Vicki Calvert** has been with AvMed for 4 years and has been a nurse for 31 years.

**What do you love about your job?**

“Being able to support people as they make lifestyle changes to promote health. I also enjoy getting to know them and sharing a laugh.”



**Healthy Eating Made Simple**

Elizabeth Ferrer, R.D., AvMed’s Registered Dietitian, shares her favorite tips for happier, healthier meals — without feeling deprived.

**How to stick with your healthy habits for good**

**T**he new year brings new motivation to make healthy changes. But resolutions are almost always easier said than done. Set yourself up for success by setting goals with these criteria in mind:

**1. GET SPECIFIC**

You need to know exactly what to do. Losing weight is a common goal, but it’s not specific enough. Ask yourself: What can I do daily to work toward weight loss?

**2. MAKE IT MEASURABLE**

Add numbers to your goal, such as: Eat at least 2 servings of vegetables every day; drink 3 sodas a week instead of 1 a day; do yoga 2 times each week.

The more specific you are, the better you’ll be able to measure your success.



**3. BE REALISTIC**

Come up with goals you feel you can actually accomplish. For example, cutting cream and sugar out of your coffee is not realistic if you hate black coffee (consider low-fat or sugar free alternatives). If your provider is helping you set goals, speak up if you think their suggestions will not work for you.

**4. SET A TIME FRAME**

Make a deadline and assess your progress at that time. If it’s not going as planned, now is your chance to adjust. Think about why it’s not working. Maybe you’re struggling to eat more vegetables because you don’t know enough ways to prepare them? Set a new goal to try a new vegetable recipe each week.

Finally, don’t try to do everything all at once. Three goals is a good place to start. And not every goal has to be a change — you can set a goal to keep up a healthy habit you’re already doing.

Remember: Celebrate your wins, learn from your losses, but never give up!

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## Recipe



## Foil-Pack Mediterranean Salmon

Serves 4 | Prep time: 10 minutes  
Cook time: 20 minutes

### Ingredients

1 pint cherry tomatoes	1 lemon, juiced
8 oz broccolini, ends trimmed	1 Tbsp olive oil
8 oz small red potatoes	1 Tbsp salt-free Mediterranean spice blend
1 (14-oz) can white beans, rinsed and drained	4 (5-oz) center-cut salmon fillets

### Nutrition facts (per serving):

Calories 590 | Fat 24g (Sat Fat 5g) | Chol 95mg | Sodium 481mg |  
Carbs 36g | Fiber 12g | Sugar 4g (inc. 0g Added Sugar) | Protein 42g  
| Vit D 20µg | Calcium 150mg | Iron 5mg | Potassium 1,600mg

### Directions

Preheat oven to 400°F. Tear 4 sheets of foil, about 12" x 15" each. Divide the veggies and beans evenly in the center of each foil sheet.

Mix together the oil, lemon juice and spice blend. Drizzle about ½ Tbsp over each veggie pile.

Set a piece of salmon on top of each, and drizzle with the remaining oil mix. Fold up the sides of the foil and crimp together, forming a pouch.

Place pouches on a baking sheet, and bake until fish and veggies are cooked through, 15 to 20 minutes.