

# health sense



Spring–Summer 2017



## Summer get-togethers

MAKE THEM FUN AND HEALTHY FOR THE FAMILY

**A**h, summer! It's time to kick back and get together—at backyard bashes, picnics in the park and parades on the Fourth of July. Here are some tips on how to keep those celebrations as healthy as they are fun.

■ **Get everybody moving.** Organize gatherings around activities that get guests on their feet. Explore a local trail together or, if kids are attending, head out on a neighborhood scavenger hunt.

Play active games—maybe soccer in a nearby field or croquet or volleyball in your backyard.

■ **Serve thirst-quenching, crowd-pleasing drinks.** Beat summer heat

by rethinking drinks. Skip sugary sodas and offer pitchers of ice-cold water instead. Add thinly sliced lemons, limes, watermelon or strawberries for flavor.

■ **Pile on the fresh produce.** Serve

family and friends just-picked summer fruits and vegetables.

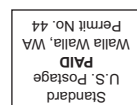
Fresh, in-season produce is at its peak in flavor and nutrition, so be ready for requests for seconds. Think veggie kebabs, leafy green salads and big bowls of cut-up fruit.

■ **Keep uninvited guests away.** Don't let disease-causing bacteria contaminate your food at outdoor gatherings.

Place perishable foods—such as burgers, deviled eggs and potato salad—in a well-insulated cooler with plenty of ice or freezer gel packs. And keep the cooler in the shade. Bacteria multiply rapidly in warm temperatures.

■ **Dish up a patriotic ending.** Serve a red, white and blue dessert: a no-bake watermelon cake. It's topped with white, yogurt-based frosting and mouth-watering blueberries. This sweet treat is packed with nutrients and low in calories. For the recipe, go to [morehealth.org/watermeloncake](http://morehealth.org/watermeloncake).

Sources: American Institute for Cancer Research; U.S. Department of Agriculture





COULD IT BE ASTHMA?

## How to spot the symptoms

**T**hink about how hard it would be to breathe through a straw for minutes or hours on end. That's how breathing can sometimes feel for people who have asthma. Asthma is a chronic lung disease that causes the airways to narrow. This can make it hard to breathe.

More than 25 million Americans now live with asthma, and that number continues to rise. And while asthma affects people of all ages, it most often starts when you're a kid.

It's important to spot the symptoms of asthma and to get medical help for it.

**What are the signs?** Sometimes asthma symptoms are mild and go away on their own. But at other times, symptoms can get worse. When this happens, it could bring on an asthma attack.

Common asthma symptoms include:

- Coughing.
- Wheezing.
- Chest tightness.
- Shortness of breath.

Not all people with asthma have the same symptoms. And having these symptoms doesn't always mean someone has the disease.

If you think you have asthma, see your doctor. He or she can find out if you have the disease by:

- Looking at your health history.
- Doing a physical exam.
- Performing a simple lung function test.

**What causes it?** The cause of someone's asthma isn't always known. But a number of things—known as triggers—can bring on symptoms or make them worse.

Common triggers include:

- Allergens, such as dust mites; animal dander; mold; and pollens from trees, grasses and flowers.
- Cigarette smoke, air pollution and certain chemicals.
- Respiratory infections.
- Physical activity.
- Stress.

If you do have asthma, your doctor can help you find out what your triggers are. You can then learn how to avoid them.

**Treating asthma.** There is no cure for asthma. But it can be managed well if you learn how to control your asthma. It's important to get ongoing care and watch for signs that the disease is getting worse.

Asthma is treated with 2 types of drugs:

■ **Quick-relief drugs.** These provide temporary relief from asthma symptoms.

■ **Long-term control drugs.** These are taken daily to control airway swelling.

It's important to take your asthma drugs the right way. So be sure to follow your doctor's instructions.

Most of the time you can treat asthma symptoms on your own. But get medical help right away if you:

- Have trouble walking or talking because you are out of breath.
- Develop blue lips or fingernails.

By working with your doctor and learning how to manage your asthma, you can breathe freely and live an active life.

Sources: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

## May is Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month

Each year, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America declares May to be National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month. It's a peak season for asthma and allergy sufferers and a perfect time to educate your family, friends, co-workers and others about these diseases.

Source: aafa.org

# The asthma-allergy connection

## What's the link?

If you have asthma, your airways are swollen and sensitive. Asthma triggers cause the airways to tighten further and make breathing more difficult. There is no cure for asthma, but medicines—and avoiding asthma triggers—can help you manage the disease.

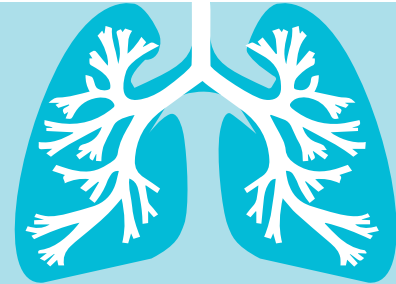
Not everyone who has allergies has asthma, but many people with asthma also have allergies. Allergies can trigger your airways to narrow. It's important to know your allergy triggers, or allergens, so you can avoid them.

### COMMON ALLERGENS THAT MAKE ASTHMA WORSE:

- Cockroaches.
- Animal dander.
- Dust mites.
- Indoor mold.
- Pollen.
- Outdoor mold.

### OTHER ASTHMA TRIGGERS MAY INCLUDE:

- Cold air.
- Exercise.
- Some illnesses and medicines.
- Tobacco smoke, air pollution and strong odors.



## Testing for asthma

**Spirometry:** This test measures air flow in your lungs—how much air you can breathe in and how fast you can blow it out.

**Physical exam:** Your doctor will probably ask questions about your symptoms and check your breathing.

### YOUR DOCTOR MAY ALSO RECOMMEND:

- Allergy testing to see what allergens might affect you.
- A test to check how sensitive your airways are.
- Tests to see if other medical problems, such as sleep apnea, are causing your asthma symptoms.

## Testing for allergies

### MOST COMMON AND RELIABLE METHOD:

**Skin testing:** Small amounts of specific allergens are placed in the skin to determine if there are any reactions.



Sources: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

## When allergies trigger asthma

Allergies can bring more problems than sniffing and sneezing. They can also trigger coughing, wheezing and breathing trouble. That's for people who have allergic asthma.

It's the most common form of asthma. The symptoms are similar to those of other types of asthma. But they're triggered by allergens that you breathe in. These can include

mold, pollen, pet dander and dust mites.

Breathing these in starts an allergic reaction. It causes narrowing, irritation and swelling of the airways.

If you have allergic asthma, control is key. Know your triggers and avoid them. And see your doctor often. He or she can help you make an asthma plan. That may include medications to help control it.



counties. For example, twice a month through the Community Produce Program, the Food Bank’s customized refrigerated trucks serve as mobile farmers markets at 56 different locations. At each distribution, each qualifying household can receive up to 20 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Low-income individuals and families can also get help to buy the food they need to be healthy through CalFresh. You may qualify for CalFresh even if you have a full-time or part-time job. CalFresh stretches a tight food budget to keep your family well-fed and healthy. The Food Bank has bilingual staff ready to assist you with the CalFresh eligibility evaluation and application process.

To find food resources near you, please visit [foodbankccs.org](http://foodbankccs.org) or call **855-309-3663 (855-309-FOOD)**.

To see if you qualify, please call the number above, but also take a look at the income eligibility chart below. ▼

## COMMUNITY PRODUCE PROGRAM

# Hunger is unacceptable

By Shelee Loughmiller

*of the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano counties*

[sloughmiller@foodbankccs.org](mailto:sloughmiller@foodbankccs.org)

925-676-7543, ext. 234

It’s unacceptable that children in our neighborhoods don’t always have enough food to eat. For millions of kids, often the only steady meals they can truly count on are the meals they get at school—when school’s out for the summer, that security vanishes.

The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano and its partner agencies provide food security to the nearly 100,000 kids who receive meals during the school year but

may go hungry this summer. The Food Bank is committed to helping people access nutritious food.

Through Food Bank programs, moms like Abigail are able to make sure their children have enough food to eat. Abigail’s husband works full-time, but it is not enough to make ends meet. She cares for their 3 daughters and turns to the Food Bank’s Community Produce Program to help stretch their precious food budget dollars.

If, like Abigail, you or someone you know needs assistance with groceries, the Food Bank can help. The Food Bank has multiple programs at locations across Contra Costa and Solano

Maximum gross income 200% Federal Poverty Line		
Household size	Monthly income	Annual income
1	\$2,010	\$24,120
2	\$2,707	\$32,480
3	\$3,404	\$40,840
4	\$4,100	\$49,200
5	\$4,797	\$57,560
6	\$5,494	\$65,920
7	\$6,190	\$74,280
8	\$6,887	\$82,640
9	\$7,584	\$91,000
10	\$8,280	\$99,360
Over 10	add \$697 each	add \$8,360 each

# CONTRA COSTA COUNTY SITES

## 1st and 3rd Tuesday

**11 a.m. to noon**

**Hercules Senior Center**, 111 Civic Center Drive, Hercules

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Buchanan Park**, 4150 Harbor St., Pittsburg

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**Pittsburg City Park**, 167 N. Parkside Drive, Pittsburg

**4 to 5 p.m.**

**Rio Vista Elementary**, 611 Pacifica Ave., Bay Point

## 2nd and 4th Tuesday

**10 to 11 a.m.**

**Nevin Community Center**, 598 Nevin Ave., Richmond

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Immaculate Heart of Mary**, 500 Fairview Ave., Brentwood

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**The Commons**, 53 Carol Lane, Oakley

**4 to 5 p.m.**

**Brentwood Community UMC**, 218 Pine St., Brentwood

## 1st and 3rd Wednesday

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Church of the Nazarene**, 1650 Ashbury Drive, Concord

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**WIC Concord**, 2355 Stanwell Circle, Concord

**4 to 5 p.m.**

**St. Bonaventure's**, 5562 Clayton Road, Clayton

## 2nd and 4th Wednesday

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Salvation Army—Antioch**, 620 E. Tregallas Road, Antioch

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**Jubilee Christian Center**, 11 Texas St., Antioch

**4 to 5 p.m.**

**Mission Elementary**, 1711 Mission Drive, Antioch

## 1st and 3rd Thursday

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Shields-Reid Center**, 410 Kelsey Road, Richmond

**1:30 to 3 p.m.**

**WIC Pittsburg**, 2311 Loveridge Road, Pittsburg

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**WIC Richmond**, 39th and Bissell Avenue, Richmond

**4 to 5 p.m.**

**Ambrose Teen Center**, 3105 Willow Pass Road, Bay Point

## 2nd and 4th Thursday

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**The Pentecostals**, 310 Central Ave., Pittsburg

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**First Baptist Church**, 224 Linda Vista, Pittsburg

**4 to 5 p.m.**

**Solomon Temple**, 655 California Ave., Pittsburg

**4 to 5 p.m.**

**Bayo Vista Child Care Center**, 2 California St., Rodeo

## 1st and 3rd Friday

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Holy Rosary Church**, 1313 A St., Antioch

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**American Legion Hall**, 403 W. 6th St., Antioch

**4 to 5 p.m.**

**Kid's Club**, 800 Gary Ave., Antioch

## 2nd and 4th Friday

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Davis Park**, 1651 Folsom Ave., San Pablo

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Boys & Girls Club**, 1301 Alhambra Ave., Martinez

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**Pleasant Hill Seventh-day**, 800 Grayson Road, Pleasant Hill

**4 to 5 p.m.**

**Las Juntas Elementary**, 4105 Pacheco Blvd., Martinez

## 1st and 3rd Saturday

**10 to 11 a.m.**

**La Clinica de la Raza**, 2000 Sierra Road, Concord

**10 to 11 a.m.**

**Living Hope Neighborhood**, 2800 Rheem Ave., Richmond

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Cambridge Elementary**, 1135 Lacey Lane, Concord

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Sojourner Truth**, 2621 Shane Drive, Richmond

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**Mt. Diablo High School**, 2611 East St., Concord

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**Kennedy High School**, 4300 Cutting Blvd., Richmond

## 2nd and 4th Saturday

**10 to 11 a.m.**

**Antioch High School**, 700 W. 18th St., Antioch

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Booker T. Anderson**, 960 S. 47th St., Richmond

**Noon to 1 p.m.**

**Carmen Dragon Elementary**, 4721 Vista Grande Drive, Antioch

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**Marsh Elementary**, 2304 G St., Antioch

**2 to 3 p.m.**

**St. Rose of Lima**, 555 Third Ave., Crockett

# Count on WIC for healthy families



**What is WIC?** WIC is a federally funded nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children. WIC serves about half of all infants and a quarter of all children living in the United States.

**Why is WIC so popular?** WIC saves health care dollars by helping families stay healthy. The WIC program started in 1972 in response to concerns over the negative effects of malnutrition among many low-income mothers and young children living in the United States. Studies have shown that the WIC program has:

- Improved birth outcomes, with fewer preterm and low-birth-weight babies.
- Reduced the incidence of low-iron anemia.
- Improved child growth and development.
- Improved diet and increased consumption of key nutrients, such as iron, protein, calcium, and vitamins A and C.
- Increased immunization rates.
- Increased access to regular health care.
- Helped children's learning skills.
- Helped children maintain a healthy weight.

**What does the WIC program do to help participants stay healthy?** The heart of the WIC program is providing checks for healthy foods (worth about \$62 a month per participant). In addition, WIC provides nutrition tips, health information, breastfeeding support, and referrals to health care and other community programs.

**Who is eligible?** Pregnant and breastfeeding women and women who just had a baby, as well as infants and children under 5 years old, are eligible. Applicants must reside in California and meet the income guidelines. Families who are currently enrolled in Medi-Cal, CalFresh ( food stamps) or CalWORKs (TANF) qualify for the WIC program. In addition, working families may also be eligible. For additional information, call the local WIC program at the toll-free number **800-414-4942** to check for eligibility. You can also search for information online at [wicworks.ca.gov](http://wicworks.ca.gov).

WIC grows healthy families! Encourage your friends and family members who are pregnant or have a child under age 5 to enroll early for the WIC program to get the maximum economic and

## Brentwood WIC

**Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**  
 171 Sand Creek Road, Suite A  
 Brentwood, CA 94513  
**925-513-6880**  
 Languages available: English and Spanish

## Concord WIC

**Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**  
 2355 Stanwell Circle  
 Concord, CA 94520  
**925-646-5370**  
 Languages available: English, Spanish and Farsi

## Pittsburg WIC

**Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**  
 2311 Loveridge Road  
 Pittsburg, CA 94565  
**925-431-2460** or **877-905-4545**  
 Languages available: English and Spanish

## Richmond WIC

**Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.**  
 39th Street and Bissell Avenue  
 Richmond, CA 94805  
**510-231-8600**  
 Languages available: English, Spanish, Laotian, Tagalog, Igbo, Arabic and Mandarin

health benefits. Visit our website, [cchealth.org/wic](http://cchealth.org/wic), call **800-414-4WIC (800-414-4942)** or visit one of our clinics listed above.

# ccLink has a new feature

By Will Harper

**P**arents of children who are assigned to a primary care provider (PCP) at one of the Contra Costa Regional Health Centers can now submit requests online to access their children's health information on *myccLink*, the free website. This service is not available to members who are assigned to a PCP in the Community Provider Network.

Parents simply need to go to the family access settings on *myccLink* and fill out an online form. The request is reviewed and processed within a few days. Once approved, parents can schedule well-child appointments, message their child's doctor and print out immunization records for school.



The option is available for parents with children ages 11 and under.

For more information about *myccLink*, visit [mycclink.cchealth.org](http://mycclink.cchealth.org) or call *myccLink* customer support at **844-622-5465**.



## Advice nurses and urgent care

**I**f you are sick or hurt, you may need urgent care. That means you need quick care but it's not an emergency. If you are not sure what kind of care you need, call the Advice Nurse line.

The Advice Nurse Unit is here to help Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP) members. We are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays. Call **877-661-6230, option 1**, to talk to an Advice Nurse.

If your call is about your child, have your child with you when you call.

The nurse may need to ask your child questions. If your child is not with you when you call, the Advice Nurse will not be able to help you. And that may delay getting care for your child.

Depending on your symptoms, you may be eligible for the following:

- An urgent care visit.
- A phone call with a CCHP doctor.
- To have an Advice Nurse order

a prescription for your symptoms (only for certain symptoms).

In addition, nurses can give advice on topics such as:

- Questions on health care and meds.
- Infectious disease exposure.
- Caring for yourself or a family member.
- Current vaccine info for you or your child.
- Health resources in your community.



# Oaxacan-style grilled corn on the cob

## Ingredients

- 1½ tablespoons queso fresco
- 1¼ teaspoons chili powder
- 3 tablespoons Mexican crema or sour cream
- ½ tablespoon salt
- ⅓ teaspoon ground red pepper
- 4 ears of corn, shucked
- 4 lime wedges

## Preparation

- Preheat the grill to medium heat.
- Combine cheese and the next 4 ingredients in a small bowl.
- Place corn on grill rack. Cover and grill 8 minutes or until lightly charred, turning corn occasionally.
- Place corn on serving plate and drizzle with crema mixture. Serve with lime wedges.

Source: [cookinglight.com](http://cookinglight.com)

Contra Costa Health Plan complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATTENTION: If you speak a language other than English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call **877-661-6230** (California Relay for hearing-impaired: **800-735-2929**).

El Plan de Salud de Contra Costa cumple con las leyes federales de derechos civiles aplicables y no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad o sexo.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al **877-661-6230, opción 2**, o al California Relay, el número para personas con discapacidad auditiva: **800-735-2929**.