Asthma and the Air We Breathe

The prevalence of asthma has been increasing since the early 1980s across all age, gender and racial groups. It is estimated that one in 15 Americans suffer from asthma, and that 50 percent of cases are “allergic-asthma,” or caused by allergens or irritants inhaled into the lungs. Some of these asthma triggers include dust, animal dander, mold, pollen, cigarette smoke and air pollution. Other health conditions, such as runny nose, sinus infections, reflux disease and psychological stress can also make asthma more difficult to manage.

In Metro Atlanta, the amounts of pollen and air pollutants during the spring and summer months can increase to extremely high levels. Not only can exposure to pollens or air pollution make symptoms worse for people with asthma, but high levels can also affect those who don’t suffer from asthma, especially the elderly and young children. It is important to limit time outdoors if possible when the levels of these substances are high in the air.

As we move into the summer months, some environmental factors in Georgia can bring about or worsen the symptoms of asthma. Asthma is characterized by inflammation of the airway passages resulting in the temporary narrowing of the airways that transport air from the nose and mouth to the lungs. Symptoms of asthma include difficulty breathing, wheezing, coughing and tightness in the chest.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for asthma; however, it can be controlled with proper prevention and treatment. Individuals with asthma should work with their physician to identify the triggers that affect them most and establish a plan for minimizing contact with those irritants.

Melissa Morgan, MS, HFS, Wellness Specialist

Sources: Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, www.aafa.org; National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, www.nhlbi.nih.gov

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**Wellness Calendar**

**BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS**

**May 18**
N. Decatur Building
1st Floor Training Room, Emory Police
12 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**May 25**
Rollins School of Public Health
8th Floor, Rita Anne Rollins Room
12 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**June 10**
Grady Faculty Office Building, Room 103
49 Jesse Hill Drive, 30303
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**BLOOD PRESSURE/GLUCOSE SCREENINGS**

**June 22**
Fayetteville Call Center
125 Fayetteville Square, 30215
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**BLOOD GLUCOSE SCREENINGS**

**May 26**
Blomeyer Fitness Center
1525 Clifton Rd, 5th Floor Conference Rm
4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

**June 30**
Blomeyer Fitness Center
1525 Clifton Rd, 5th Floor Conference Rm
4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

**Air Quality Index Health Advisory**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Air Quality</th>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Health Advisory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>0-50</td>
<td>Air quality is good. Enjoy activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>51-100</td>
<td>People who are unusually sensitive to air pollution should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups</td>
<td>101-150</td>
<td>People with heart or lung disease (including asthma), older adults and children should cut back or reschedule strenuous activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhealthy</td>
<td>152-200</td>
<td>Everyone, especially people with heart or lung disease (including asthma), older adults and children should cut back or reschedule strenuous activities. Sensitive groups should avoid strenuous activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Unhealthy</td>
<td>201-300</td>
<td>Everyone, especially people with heart or lung disease (including asthma), older adults and children should significantly cut back on physical activities. Sensitive groups should avoid all physical activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart: Clean Air Campaign, www.cleanaircampaign.com

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**Freedom From Smoking**

**June 25 – August 13**
(Fridays, 8-Week Session)
12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Emory Wellness Center
1762 Clifton Rd NE
Suite 1100, Conf. Room

**Wellness Fairs**

**May 19**
Executive Park
5 Executive Park South, 30329
8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**June 18**
Center for Ethics
1531 Dickey Drive, 30322
8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

**Walking Groups**

Meet Me @ The Quad
Tuesdays, June 1-29
8 a.m.-8:30 a.m.

For more information, call 404-727-4328 or visit www.fsap.emory.edu

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Please forward comments to:
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Email. shaneesa.ashford@emory.edu

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**Chart:** Clean Air Campaign, www.cleanaircampaign.com