

Region II Asthma News



Putting on Airs is up and running

The Central CT Health District (CCHD) with funding from the CT Department of Public Health has launched the *Putting on Airs* home visitation asthma program. CCHD, who coordinates and oversees the Region II Asthma Coalition, received a three year grant to implement the *Putting on Airs* program within Region II consisting of 25 cities and towns. Currently 6 local health departments are participating in the program serving 18 towns. "We are thrilled to have this grant and be able to provide such an important service to asthma patients in this region", stated Paul Hutcheon, Director of Health for the Central CT Health District. "The great Hartford area has some of the highest rates

of asthma in the state, making this a very appropriate program to implement in our area".



The *Putting on Airs* program created by Ledgelight Health District is an evidence-based home visitation program that sends a health educator and sanitarian into the home to identify asthma triggers and educate parents and their children about ways to make their home "asthma friendly". The health educator also reviews their current medications and makes sure they are using their asthma medications

properly. "I cannot tell you how many times I have seen an asthma patient use their controller medication "as needed" and their quick relief medication daily." With thorough review of their asthma treatment plan, these incidences will occur less and less and patients will be better controlled." says Loreen Gawel Program Coordinator of the New Britain Asthma Initiative. The grant money provides the staff for the home visit as well as free pillow and mattress covers if needed.

To help out with this program or become involved with this Coalition please call Hilary Norcia at 860-665-8571 or e-mail hnorcia@newingtonct.gov

World Asthma Day Event Slated for May 4th

The Region II Asthma Coalition will be hosting its first annual Asthma Day event at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford on Tuesday, May 4th from 10- 2 pm. The focus is "Controlling Your Asthma." The event will be located in the LOB concourse that connects

the Capital building and the LOB itself. "We thought this would be an ideal location for this year's event", states Hilary Norcia, Coordinator of the Region II Asthma Coalition. "People walk through this concourse all day, includ-

ing legislators who we want to take note of how crucial it is to have funding for asthma programs."

16 tables will be provided to vendors with information on current resources available to asthma patients. Please call Hilary Norcia to participate in this event at 860-665-8571

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Hartford Health and Human Services Department is Pilot site for the Health Equity Index program

The Connecticut Association of Directors Of Health, Inc. (CADH), selected the City Of Hartford Health and Human Services Department as one of the pilot sites for the Implementation of the CADH Health Equity Index.

The Health Equity Index is a community – based tool that profiles and measures social , political, economic, and environmental conditions that are associated with higher rates of disease, injury, and premature death among particular population groups.

This approach goes beyond the current emphasis on health education and individual behaviors that have little impact on reducing the difference in health status seen in certain populations across the state.

The Health Equity Index illuminates the conditions in neighborhoods and communi-

ties that are the root causes of poorer health. Additionally, this approach uses a collaborative process that brings public health personnel together with community leaders, municipal department heads, and community-based organizations to address health inequities.

The Health Equity Index was developed in response to local public health directors' desire to improve the health and quality of life in communities such as Hartford where disparities and poorer health are prevalent.

The initiative is made possible through a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The Health Equity Alliance (HEA), an initiative of CADH, will be providing technical assistance to Hartford with the implementation of the Index, workforce development, and engaging the community in dialogue on health inequities and their root causes.

For more information please contact Rita Kornblum, Project Manager at:

**860-547-1426 ext 7188 or
rkornblum@hartford.gov**

May is Asthma Awareness Month

Each May, thousands of organizations join together for Asthma Awareness Month to increase public awareness of the asthma epidemic and to take action to get asthma under control in communities across the nation. Asthma affects approximately 23 million people of all ages and races. And, though asthma is widespread, public awareness of common asthma triggers and effective asthma management strategies remains limited.



Hundreds of asthma awareness events will take place across the United States this May. EPA can help publicize your event on our Web site and AsthmaCommunityNetwork.org – our national asthma community's Online Network. Submit your event online:

<http://asthmaevents.cadmusweb.com>

Asthma Resources

- American Lung Association
www.lungusa.org
- Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
www.aafa.org
- Centers for Disease
www.cdc.gov
- Environmental Protection Agency
ww.epa.gov/asthma
- National Institutes of Health
<http://health.nih.gov>
- The New England Asthma Regional Council
www.asthamregionalcouncil.org
- Contact your local health department of hospital for a list of programs and services

Healthy Homes Initiative Kicks Off in Hartford

The CT Children's Medical Center along with Environment Northeast, the University of CT Health Center, the Christian Activities Council, and the Blue Hills Civic Association received a grant from the Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to implement a "Healthy Homes" project in two neighborhoods in Hartford.

This environmental health project focuses on safety, lead hazards, energy efficiency, and identifying asthma triggers in the home.

HUD started the Healthy Homes Program back in 1999 and has since funded several communities to implement the program. They believe in a unified or "one touch" approach where trained community organizers go into



the home and assess the homes for all environmental issues. "We used to just check for lead in the home", says Amy McLean Salls, the Healthy Homes Project Manager from CCMC's LAMPP Project, "but there are so many other health hazards present in the home that can have an effect on the residents' health; so we are better off doing "one stop shopping and addressing all the issues in one visit."

Since October 2009, 180 assessments have been done in the Blue Hills and Upper Albany neighborhoods in Hartford.

"When we are in the home, our community organizers also make referrals to other programs if they feel the family needs additional resources such as asthma management, help in paying their utilities, etc." "This is truly a collaborative effort."

For more information please contact:

Amy McLean Salls at LAMPP 860-610-4237 or Jamie Howland at Environment Northeast at 860-246-7121

CT Children's Medical Center Offers Asthma and Environmental Allergy Testing Clinic

The Asthma Center at CCMC was established on March 1, 2001. The Asthma center was established based upon the success of Easy Breathing in changing pediatric asthma management in Hartford and upon the promise of Easy Breathing to change pediatric asthma management throughout the State of CT.

The mission of the Asthma Center is to reduce the burden of pediatric asthma in Connecticut communities by:

1. Implementing the Easy Breathing Program to CT Primary Care Providers

2. Creating projects that look at the epidemiology of and risk factors of pediatric asthma
3. Providing clinical information for providers and conducting education programs for children with asthma and their families.

The Asthma Center now offers allergy testing and spirometry testing (a lung function test) to effectively evaluate the child's asthma and identify environmental asthma triggers (they do not provide food testing).

The child should be at least 4 years

old for allergy testing and seven years old for the spirometry testing but they will accept children as young as 2 years old who exhibit classic allergy symptoms (runny nose, itchy and watery eyes, etc). Counseling and education are also included as part of the testing process.

For more information or to make an appointment please contact:
CCMC Asthma Center
282 Washington St, Hartford, CT
860-545-9442 or e-mail
Bturgeon@ccmckids.org

Asthma Calendar of Events

- **April 29th** RAC Meeting
Newington Senior Center
Newington, 10am -12 pm
- **May 4th**—World Asthma Day
Legislative Office Building
Concourse Hartford—10am - 2pm
- **June 13th** Hartford ACTA (Asthma Call to Action) Task Force Meeting—
June 13th at the Burgdorf/Bank of America located at:
131 Coventry St, Hartford 12-1:30

Have Something to Say????

To submit newsletter articles/ events for the Summer addition please e-mail submission to Hilary Norcia at:

hnorcia@newingtonct.gov

Submissions are due by June 18th.

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Region II Asthma Coalition is committed to the education and prevention of asthma to individuals and families living in Region II.

Current Region II Asthma Coalition Members:

*Aetna Better Health
American Lung Association
Bristol/Burlington Health District
Central CT Health District
CT Coalition of Environmental Justice
CT Dept of Public Health
CT Children's Medical Center—Asthma Center
Community Health Network
Community Health Services
Farmington Valley Health District
Hartford Health and Human Services Department
Hartford Public Schools
Manchester Health Department
Merck Pharmaceuticals
New Britain Asthma Initiative
New Britain Health Department
North Central District Health Department
Plainville Health Department
West Hartford/Bloomfield Health District
Windsor Health Department*

Spring Meeting Schedule:

April 29th, May 20th, June 30th

All meetings are at the Newington Senior and Disabled Center at 10 am.

Topic of the Quarter: Molds and Asthma

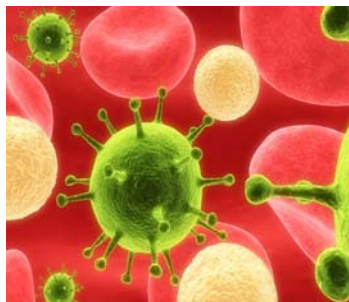
What are molds?

Molds are fungi that can be found both indoors and outdoors. No one knows how many species of fungi exist but estimates range from tens of thousands to perhaps three hundred thousand or more. Molds grow best in warm, damp, and humid conditions, and spread and reproduce by making spores. Mold spores can survive harsh environmental conditions, such as dry conditions, that do not support normal mold growth. Some of the more common indoor molds include: Cladosporium, Penicillium, Alternaria, and Aspergillus

How do molds affect people?

Some people are sensitive to molds. For these people, exposure to molds can cause symptoms such as nasal stuffiness, eye irritation, wheezing, or skin irritation.

Severe reactions may occur among workers exposed to large amounts of molds in occupational settings, such as farmers working around moldy



hay. Severe reactions may include fever and shortness of breath. Some people with chronic lung illnesses, such as obstructive lung disease, may develop mold infections in their lungs.

How can people decrease mold exposure?

- Keep the humidity level in the house between 40% and 60%.
- Use an air conditioner or a dehumidifier during humid months.
- Be sure the home has adequate ventilation, including exhaust fans.
- Add mold inhibitors to paints before application.
- Clean bathrooms with mold killing products.
- Do not carpet bathrooms and basements.
- Remove or replace previously soaked carpets and upholstery.

Source: Article by the CDC (<http://www.cdc.gov/mold/faqs.htm#results>)