



The Wheezing & Sneezing Times

Academy Allergy, Asthma & Sinus, P.C.



New Physician!!!

We are pleased to announce that a new physician, **Dr. Luisa Pilar D. Ermitano**, has joined our practice and will be available to see patients this fall! Find her bio under the physician tab. Please help us welcome **Dr. Ermitano!**

Announcements:

Watch our website for announcements concerning the arrival of this year's **flu vaccine!!**

Attention all **asthma** patients!!! The flu shot is recommended for anyone diagnosed with asthma. See your PCP or our office to receive this year's **flu shot!**

Join us for the 2007 **SAXONY FAMILY FUN DAY!** Saturday, September 29th Noon-3 pm at our Saxony office. This is a **free** event featuring games, a bounce house obstacle course, miniature golf and food!

Points of

Interest:

- Do you or a family member have **food allergies?** Stay up-to-date on food allergy alerts by visiting the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network's website. A link to this site is located under the patient education tab.

“Leaves of Three, Let Them Be”

“Leaves of three, let them be.”

Everyone has heard this saying referring to poison ivy. Research shows that the ever changing global climate is affecting the way poison ivy is growing. This rash-inducing plant appears to be growing quicker and producing more potent oil compared with earlier decades. So, it is not your imagination that poison ivy is worse than when you or your parents were kids. Researchers believe this is caused by an increase in carbon dioxide levels. These higher levels allow the plant to produce larger leaves, grow faster, and produce a hardier plant with more potent oil. “Bigger, more-toxic poison ivy is a serious concern, says Paul Beggs of Macquarie University in Australia. It’s another factor to add to his tally of the extra misery that climate change might bring to people with allergies.” (Science News Online: Pumped-Up Poison Ivy: Carbon dioxide boosts plant’s size, toxicity).

How do I avoid poison ivy?

Know what the poison ivy looks like! Poison ivy can grow as a plant, shrub or vine. The leaves can be red or green depending on the season. Each leaf of a poison ivy plant has three leaflets.

When out in areas of brush, wear long pants, long-sleeve shirts and socks with closed shoes. This will avoid direct contact with the plant. Be sure to remove and wash the clothing immediately to avoid spreading any oil that may be on the clothing.

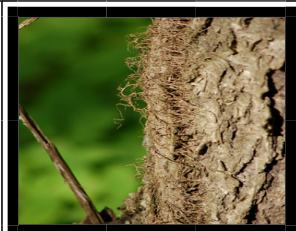
Help! I think I just touched poison ivy, what should I do?

If you think you have come into contact with poison ivy, wash the area immediately with soap and water. If a rash develops, over-the-counter topical ointments may provide some relief. Contact your physician if a serious reaction occurs.

What are the symptoms of poison ivy?

Symptoms of a reaction to poison ivy may include a rash with redness, itching, swelling and blisters. The reaction usually develops a day or two after exposure and can last up to three weeks.

“Climate change isn’t just increasing outdoor temperatures and warming oceans. It may also greatly increase your chance of getting a really bad case of poison ivy.” (MedicineNet.com: Climate Change Brings Super Poison Ivy).



Universal Healthcare

"If criminals have a right to a lawyer, working Americans should have the right to a doctor."-Senator Harris Wofford (D-Pennsylvania, 1991).



It is all over the news...healthcare reform. Exactly what is healthcare reform and universal healthcare? One definition of this is "a universal, market-driven health-care system that all Americans can afford". This would make access to health care universal and affordable. Individuals would be able to control where their health-care dollars go. Employers would be freed of the burden of offering health benefits.



Currently the United States has several types of privately and publicly funded health insurance plans that provide healthcare services. The traditional model of health care in the U.S. has three ways to provide health insurance:

1. As a benefit of employment with continued benefits available after retirement.
2. Through government funded programs, such as Medicaid or Medicare, for the eligible low-income persons, those over the age of 65, and people with disabilities.
3. Through private purchase of health insurance.

These methods have been eroded in recent years. Now, a growing number of employers offer no health benefits, have reduced benefits or have withdrawn benefits from retirees. Employment-based plans that were once fully funded by employers now require employee contributions and co-payments. "For people with good insurance or other financial resources, the US offers the best care in the world. But, for the 45 million Americans who lack insurance or the ability to pay, that world-class care is as distant as the moon."-MedHunters Article: Healthcare in the United States.

"The United States along with South Africa is one of the few industrialized nations without universal coverage. There is currently an ongoing debate on the need to achieve universal coverage as well as the best methods for improving the U.S. health care system." Wikipedia-Health care in the United States. Is healthcare reform or universal healthcare the solution for this crisis? No one knows the answer to that question. Only time will tell. This will be a huge issue debated in the upcoming election year.

Food Allergies and School



With school right around the corner, it is important to remember that food allergies can be life-threatening. The risk of accidental exposure can be reduced in the school setting.

The responsibility lies within the food allergic child and his/her parents as well as the school.

Some actions to reduce exposure to food allergens at school include:

- Notify the school of the child's allergies and work with the school to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school day including in the classroom, in the cafeteria, on field-trips or during after-school activities.
- Educate the food allergic child on self-management of his food allergy. This should include:
 - ◇ Recognizing safe and unsafe foods.
 - ◇ Strategies for avoiding unsafe foods such as not trading food or eating food with unknown ingredients.
 - ◇ Recognizing symptoms of an allergic reaction. These may include: a tingling sensation in the mouth, swelling of the tongue and the throat, difficulty breathing, hives, vomiting, abdominal cramps or diarrhea.

- ◇ Instruct the child to tell an adult **immediately** if he/she suspects a reaction. Tell the child exactly what to say.
- ◇ Knowing what an Epi-Pen is, where it is at school and how to use it.

There is no one way to manage food allergies at school. Each allergic child's situation is different and each child's situation needs careful consideration before any plan of action is taken. Education, cooperation and awareness are keys to keeping children with food allergies safe while at school.

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