



Health & Wellness Seminar Asthma and Allergies Thursday, April 25, 2013 from 2:30pm–3:30pm City Hall—Council Chambers Speaker: Dr. Mario Anzaldua, MD

Asthma and allergies often go hand-in-hand.

Asthma is a disease of the branches of the windpipe (bronchial tubes), which carry air in and out of the lungs. There are several different types of asthma.

Allergic asthma is a type of asthma that is triggered by an allergy (for example, pollen or mold spores). According to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, half of the 20 million Americans with asthma have allergic asthma.

Air is normally taken into the body through the nose and windpipe and into the bronchial tubes. At the end of the tubes are tiny air sacs called alveoli that deliver fresh air (oxygen) to the blood. The air sacs also collect stale air (carbon dioxide), which is exhaled out of the body. During normal breathing, the bands of muscle surrounding the airways are relaxed and air moves freely. But during an asthma episode or "attack," there are three main changes that stop air from moving freely into the airways:

- The bands of muscle that surround the airways tighten, causing them to narrow in what is called "bronchospasm."
- The lining of the airways becomes swollen, or inflamed.
- The cells that line the airways produce more mucus, which is thicker than normal.

The narrowed airway makes it more difficult for air to move in and out of the lungs. As a result, people with asthma feel they cannot get enough air. All of these changes make breathing difficult.

Anyone can get asthma, although it tends to run in families. An estimated 20 million adults and children in the U.S. have asthma. The disease is becoming more widespread.

Sources: American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI): "An Unwelcome Return: 10 Tips to Ease Your Spring Allergy Symptoms."

AAAAI: "Tips to Remember: Outdoor Allergens."

The Human Resources Department in conjunction with Mission Regional Medical Center will be hosting health and wellness seminars each month. Employees will receive health tips to take home and a plan for taking better care of themselves. Please make plans to attend. Sign up now by calling Human Resources at 580-8631 or emailing npeña@missiontexas.us.

Our mission is to promote health awareness and to encourage healthy lifestyles.

Questions? Contact the Human Resources Department at 956-580-8630.

