WHAT IS SPIROMETRY?

Spirometry is an excellent way to diagnose an existing asthma condition efficiently and quickly. It is the most basic and frequently performed breathing test in the world. This quick, non-invasive and painless test is performed on a spirometer. This machine is used to measure an individual’s lung function, specifically the amount of air inhaled and exhaled and the speed of that process. The spirometer device consists of a disposable mouthpiece and tubing connected to a laptop that records the results and displays them on a graph.

To undergo spirometry, a person begins by breathing three normal breaths into the Spirometer. Then they are asked to inhale deeply and then exhale through the mouth into the mouthpiece forcefully and quickly. Nose clips are used during the test to make sure that the spirometry measures only the air that comes out of the mouth. Most of the time this breathing test will be repeated to get consistent results. These tests can often be used to determine the cause of shortness of breath, including any kind of obstructive disease that blocks breathing, or restrictive disease that limits the expansion and capacity of the lungs.

Through routine spirometry, lung diseases like asthma, chronic bronchitis and pulmonary fibrosis can often be diagnosed in the early stages when treatment is most effective. Further, once a lung disease is diagnosed, spirometry testing can used to monitor improvements in lung functions with treatment. This will help your doctor find the best treatment plan for you. If you have lung disease, you should have spirometry done at least yearly.

The University of Pittsburgh Asthma Institute recognizes the importance of early detection of chronic lung diseases. We encourage all individuals with breathing problems or lung diseases who have not had a spirometry lung function test or pulmonary function test to contact the their physician. With a prescription order from your doctor, spirometry can be done at the Comprehensive Lung Center or our new Greensburg location.

You may also choose to see any of our doctors who specialize in asthma. An appointment can be scheduled with Dr. Sally Wenzel, Dr. Fernando Holguin, Dr. Andre Petrov, or Dr. Merritt Fajt for a complete diagnosis. To schedule an appointment, please call 412-648-6161.

INTERNATIONAL PITTSBURGH LUNG CONFERENCE

On December 10th and 11th, Drs. Sally Wenzel, Anuradha & Prabir Ray hosted the Pittsburgh International Lung Conference. This is a conference where regional, national & international experts presented the newest breakthroughs in asthma and clinical innovations for improving patient care and quality of life. Our keynote lecture was presented by Jeffrey M. Drazen, MD, the Editor-in-Chief of the New England Journal of Medicine. National and international professionals in all divisions of healthcare attended and spoke at the conference including healthcare practitioners, scientists, health industry representatives, asthma specialty nurses, and pharmacists. Just one more thing the Asthma Institute is doing to increase professional understanding, foster ground-breaking research and improve the treatment of severe asthma!

WE WISH YOU A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR!

Division of Pulmonary, Allergy and Critical Care Medicine
Announcing UPMC Greensburg Allergy Associates

We are pleased to announce the opening of UPP-Greensburg Allergy Associates, part of the University of Pittsburgh Asthma Institute, on January 4th, 2011. Dr. Martin Murcek, Sr. has retired after a long and impressive career of providing wonderful allergy care to the community. We are honored that Dr. Murcek has chosen the University of Pittsburgh Asthma Institute to continue quality care at this practice. The office location and phone will remain at 562 Shearer St, Suite 101, in Greensburg. We provide a selection of services related to your allergies and asthma, including allergy skin tests, allergen immunotherapy, drug desensitization, and spirometry. We also hope to add additional services in the near future. Our physicians are pleased to provide the latest and most comprehensive pulmonary care to you, at the local level, via UPMC’s vast clinical research base.

Initially, we will be staffing the office with four physicians whom you may recognize from visits to the Comprehensive Lung Center and/or Asthma Institute:

Dr. Sally Wenzel, Professor of Medicine, is board certified in Pulmonary Diseases an Internal Medicine, and is internationally recognized for her contribution to identifying vastly different personal approaches to the treatment of asthma. She has a passion for understanding and improving the treatment of asthma, particularly severe asthma.

Dr. Fernando Holguin, Associate Professor of Medicine. Dr Holguin’s clinical interests primarily focus on treating patients with severe asthma and on understanding the association between environmental asthma triggers with asthma severity and control.

Dr. Merritt Fajt, Clinical Instructor of Medicine, is board certified in Allergy and Clinical Immunology and Internal Medicine. Her clinical interests include caring for patients with asthma, environmental, food or drug allergies and immunologic disorders, and participating in community outreach events.

Dr. Andrej Petrov, Assistant Professor of Medicine and Medical Director of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, is board certified in Allergy and Clinical Immunology and Internal Medicine. His clinical interests include upper and lower airway allergic diseases, paradoxical vocal cord dysfunction, adult immunodeficiencies, drug allergy and desensitization, chronic cough, urticaria (hives) and angioedema, food allergy, and atopic and contact dermatitis.

Dr. Allyson Larkin is board certified in Allergy and Clinical Immunology and Internal Medicine. Her clinical interests include caring for adults and children with asthma, allergic disease and immunologic disorders.

We look forward to continuing quality care for our patients throughout the region.

For information on any of our studies, please call the asthma research line at: 866-804-5278