

The Allergy & Asthma Clinic

www.TheAllergyClinic.com

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Newsletter

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WILDFIRE SEASON IS UPON US

Wildfire season used to occur during the months of May through October, but as many experts predict, fire season will likely start earlier and end later in the year. September and October are the most vulnerable months for wildfires, as we usually have strong winds during this time of the year. Rising temperatures result in more water being drawn from plants, soil and vegetation, and this dried debris then acts as a natural fuel source for wildfire.

According to several environmental agencies, the dried vegetation and California's ongoing drought, increase the risk of a wildfire by tenfold and usually, these fires spread more rapidly than they can be contained. According to the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, of the 20 most destructive wildfires in California history, 12 of them took place in September and October,

During the fall, we often see many patient's asthma and allergy symptoms flare as a result of the wildfires, even from fires as far north as Oregon. Remember that prevention and awareness are key in managing any medical condition, including allergies and asthma.

Check the air quality. AirNow.gov is a great resource, as they provided current fire conditions and even send you email alerts regarding the air quality. The U.S. Forest Service can also provide you with real-time smoke monitoring data.

When the air quality is poor:

- Stay indoors as much as possible and reduce physical activity outside.
- Keep windows and doors closed to help prevent polluted outside air from getting into your home.
- Avoid using anything that burns, such as wood fireplaces, gas logs, gas stoves and candles. Limit the use of products with aerosols, such as air fresheners and aerosolized household cleaners.

- Run your air conditioner if you have one. Set the air intake to "recirculate" and keep the filter clean. If you don't have air conditioning, try to run a fan to improve air circulation.
- If you have a HEPA air purifier, run it continuously, especially in your bedroom. Make sure that the filters are changed regularly.
- If you must go outdoors, wear a mask, preferably an N95.
- If you have asthma or reactive airway disease, make sure that you have your rescue inhaler with you. Make sure that you are taking all of your preventative asthma and allergy medications as prescribed.

We have been fortunate that evacuations as a result of wildfires are less common in the Bay Area, but in the event you or someone you know are at risk, have them make sure that they have at least a 30-day supply of their medications at all times. Make sure that all medications are stored where they can be easily accessed in the event of an emergency situation.

A Message About Adrenaline Injector Devices

Recently, a patient picked up his new prescription for an EpiPen at his local pharmacy and unfortunately, the device given to him had an expiration date of about 8 months. As many of you know, even with insurance coverage, these devices can be quite expensive. With that said, whenever you are renewing your prescription for any of these devices, make sure that the expiration date is at least 12 months from the time the unit is picked up from the pharmacy. Adrenaline injector devices are used to treat a life-threatening allergic reaction, which can occur in those with severe food, environmental, stinging insects and drug allergies. While we hope these devices are never used, adrenaline can help save your life.

In observance of Labor Day Holiday, our office will be closed on Monday, September 5, 2022.