

## Asthma Experts Advise Pediatricians

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### *Pediatricians Vital to Improved Outcomes*

Pediatricians need to diagnose asthma earlier and identify allergy triggers if they want to achieve better outcomes with their asthma patients, according to allergy and asthma experts who spoke at an educational program sponsored by National Jewish Health. Pediatricians from around the country learned how to integrate into the pediatric setting evidence-based medicine and the 2007 NIH Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma to improve care for the millions of children that suffer from this chronic condition. Nearly 80 percent of patients with asthma are managed by primary care physicians.

“Healthcare providers must work together to do a better job of identifying allergies and asthma early on in children through Specific IgE blood tests or skin tests,” said panelist Andy Liu, MD, Associate Professor of Allergy & Immunology, Department of Pediatrics, National Jewish Health. “With earlier diagnosis, we can improve patient outcomes. That requires more pediatricians to integrate the new NIH guidelines into their daily practice and to determine whether to treat or refer a child to a specialist.”

National Jewish Health sponsored the program titled, “Early Interventional Strategies to Curb the Asthma Epidemic: Incorporating Evidence-Based Medicine and the NIH Guidelines into Your Practice to Improve Patient Outcomes.” The session informed pediatricians about the importance of controlling asthma in order to minimize the effect of the disease and to improve patient outcomes through medication and reduction of environmental triggers, such as dust mites and animal dander.

“Almost 90 percent of children with asthma have allergic sensitivities,” said Dr. Liu. “Our national asthma guidelines stress the importance of allergy testing to identify and reduce exposure to relevant allergens and successfully manage asthma in the long-term.”

Asthma is one of the most common chronic childhood diseases afflicting approximately 6.5 million children. The disease causes nearly 500,000 hospitalizations annually and results in a significant economic burden on our healthcare system. Additionally, asthma leads to 14 million lost school days each year and the disease significantly impacts quality of life in children.<sup>[1]</sup>

**National Jewish Health** is known worldwide for treatment of patients with respiratory, immune and related disorders, and for groundbreaking medical research. Founded in 1899 as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish provides the best integrated and innovative care for patients and their families; seeks to understand and find cures for the diseases we research; and educates and trains the next generation of healthcare professionals to be leaders in medicine and science. We pursue this vision by pioneering individualized medicine programs which embrace the paradigm shift from reactive medicine to proactive, personalized healthcare. For 11 consecutive years, **U.S. News & World Report** has ranked National Jewish the No. 1 respiratory hospital in the nation. Scholarly publisher Thomson Scientific has ranked National Jewish among the 25 most influential research institutions in the world in its areas of focus. Further information can be found by visiting [www.nationaljewish.org](http://www.nationaljewish.org).

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[1] Akinbami L. Asthma prevalence, healthcare use and mortality: United States, 2003-05. NCHS Health E-Stats;

2007. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/pubs/pubd/hestats/ashtma03-05/asthma03-05.htm>. Accessed May 16, 2008.

**National Jewish Health** is the leading respiratory hospital in the nation. Founded 120 years ago as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish Health today is the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders. Patients and families come to National Jewish Health from around the world to receive cutting-edge, comprehensive, coordinated care. To learn more, visit the [media resources page](#).

## Media Contacts

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