

# THE ALLERGY & ASTHMA CLINIC

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NEWSLETTER

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## **Summer Means Barbecues, Picnics — and Food Allergies**

Ants, bees and rain aren't the only things that can put a damper on a picnic or barbecue. For more than 12 million Americans, food allergies can also ruin the fun, by causing problems ranging from the mild (itchy bumps and stomach aches) to the severe and life-threatening (swelling of the throat and difficulty breathing).

To be food allergy savvy at your next picnic, whether you are planning the event or have food allergies yourself, the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) and its allergist members (including Dr. Engler), offer the following tips for keeping food allergies off the menu:

**Consider condiment packs** — Instead of large containers of condiments, use individual-sized packets of ketchup, mustard, relish and mayonnaise. These condiment packs will help prevent cross contamination that can occur when sharing large containers.

**Pack foods separately** — When preparing for a get-together away from home, pack allergic and non-allergic foods in separate containers.

**Use a plastic tablecloth** — In addition to dressing up your barbecue or picnic, a tablecloth helps to prevent guests from coming in contact with any allergy-causing food particles left on the table from previous meals.

**Provide a serving utensil for each food item** — Separate utensils help reduce cross contamination between dishes. And be sure you have enough plates, cups, napkins and utensils so no one will have to share.

**Carry medications** — If you or a loved one has had allergic reactions to food in the past, be sure to have emergency medications on hand just in case unrecognized food allergens are hiding in picnic treats.

**Serve allergic guests first** — Grill foods for guests with allergies first, or cook the items on a fresh piece of aluminum foil. Also, allow guests with allergies to dig into the food first, before cross-contamination of items can occur.

**Remember the wipes** — For get-togethers in forest preserves and other natural areas, soap and water might be tough to come by, so come prepared with disinfecting wipes and anti-bacterial gel. Cleaning hands and faces after eating helps reduce the likelihood of allergy-causing food particles being passed during play.

**Check cell phone coverage** — If your picnic or barbecue is away from home, be sure you can get a cell phone signal in the area to call 911 if someone has a severe allergic reaction.

If you or a loved one experience an allergic reaction to food, it's important to see an allergist, who can help pinpoint which food is causing the reaction and develop a plan for avoiding it.

**Properly treat your pollen allergies** — Make sure your current allergy treatment plan is working to help keep your allergies from flaring up when you go outside.

If you have questions about food allergy or any other matter related to allergies or asthma, please contact us. We are here to help you and your family feel your best.

## **NEWS ALERT: Stolen Advair Diskus Inhalers Found on Prescription Market**

### **Important information regarding GlaxoSmithKline's Advair Diskus Inhaler's, a drug commonly used to treat patients with asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease**

Recently, batches of stolen Advair Diskus inhalers have been found on the prescription market. Since the safety and effectiveness of these inhalers cannot be assured, they should not be used. The dosage strength and lot numbers (batches) of the stolen Advair Diskus inhalers are:

Advair Diskus 250/50 (NDC 0173-0696-00), Lot 9ZP2255, Exp: Sep 2010  
Advair Diskus 500/50 (NDC 0173-0697-00), Lot 9ZP3325, Exp: Sep 2010

Patients with Advair Diskus Inhalers with these lot numbers should: Immediately contact GlaxoSmithKline's Customer Response Center 888-825-5249. Follow-up with us or the prescribing physician or pharmacist to obtain proper replacement. Any questions regarding the withdrawal can be directed to the manufacturer at 1-888-825-5249. Additional information regarding this recall can be found on the FDA's MedWatch website at [www.fda.gov/MedWatch](http://www.fda.gov/MedWatch).

## **Allergy Clinic Staff Member performs National Anthem in Washington, DC**

Maria Fassio Pignati, one of our administrative assistants and State President of the Grand Lodge of California, Order Sons of Italy in America, was recently invited to Washington, DC to perform the National Anthems of Italy and the United States at the Sons of Italy Foundation's National Education & Leadership Awards Gala. Attendees/honorees at the event included the President of Italy Giorgio Napolitano, former President Bill Clinton, Composer/Producer Quincy Jones, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, and actor Joe Mantegna. Maria is an operatic soprano who performs regularly as a soloist and member of two opera ensembles. We are very proud of Maria and all of her accomplishments and feel quite fortunate to have such a lovely, dedicated employee on our staff to help us care for our patients.

## **Office Hours**

In observance of Labor Day, our office will be closed on Monday, September 6, 2010. Our office will be open regular business hours:

|                       |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Saturday, September 4 | 9AM-Noon<br>(Allergy shots only) |
| Tuesday, September 7  | 9AM-7PM                          |