

For immediate release

Children's Mercy Hospital Receives Five Year \$640,000 NIH Grant To Fund Research of Asthma in Children

Kansas City, Mo – May 6, 2011 – The National Institutes of Health announced a five year grant totaling \$640,593 for the **Characterization of the Role of Histamine in Children with Asthma**, a study to determine the effect of treatment with antihistamines in children with a specific asthma phenotype.

May is Asthma Awareness Month. Asthma is a chronic respiratory disease, and according to the EPA, affects the quality of life for almost 25 million Americans, including an estimated 7 million children. Asthma is a leading cause of school absences, accounting nationally for nearly 13 million missed school days annually. Asthma is also the number one reason children are hospitalized at Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics in Kansas City, Mo.

While histamine is known to be a central mediator in the genesis of allergic asthma, previous studies have not indicated that treatment with antihistamines is useful in pediatric patients with asthma. As a heterogeneous disease, asthma may need to be treated differently in different people depending on their asthma phenotype. This study evaluates whether children with a specific asthma phenotype may respond better than others to asthma treatment with antihistamines.

"This is a novel research design that will use non-invasive methods that incorporate pharmacogenetic, pharmacodynamic, and pharmacokinetic data into identifying children with a specific asthma phenotype that may respond better to a particular treatment," says [Bridgette L. Jones, MD](#), principal investigator; Children's Mercy pediatrician in the division of clinical pharmacology and section of allergy, asthma and immunology; and Assistant Professor at the UMKC School of Medicine. "This approach may be useful in the evaluation of other treatments for asthma, and may set the stage for improved evaluation of future asthma therapies in children and better outcomes."

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About Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics

Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics, located in Kansas City, Mo., is one of the nation's top pediatric medical centers. The 314-bed hospital provides care for children from birth through the age of 18, and has been recognized by the American Nurses Credentialing Center with Magnet designation for excellence in nursing services, and ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of "America's Best Children's Hospitals." Its faculty of 600 pediatricians and researchers across more than 40 subspecialties are actively involved in clinical care, pediatric research, and educating the next generation of pediatric subspecialists. For more information about Children's Mercy and its research, visit childrensmercy.org or download our mobile phone app *CMH4YOU* for all phone types. For breaking news and videos, follow us on [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#).