

Mile Bluff participates in asthma research study

Asthma patients who are served by practitioners from Mile Bluff Medical Center have an opportunity to participate in an investigation titled "Azmatrics." This article was authored by Dr. David Hahn, a family physician working through the Wisconsin Research and Education Network (WREN) and Dr. Leon Radant, a Mile Bluff Medical Center staff member who is working with Dr. Hahn on the study.

Asthma is a common respiratory condition marked by a cough, wheezing, and shortness of breath. Individuals with a history of asthma who are served by the physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners of the Mile Bluff Medical Center will have an opportunity to participate in an investigation known as AZMATICS which refers to the AZithroMycin Asthma Trial In Community Settings.



Dr. David Hahn

Current treatments for asthma involve the use of medications that relax the smooth muscle of the airway. These medications are known as bronchodilators. In addition, inflammation in these reactive airways is quieted with use of inhaled steroids.

Some cases of asthma may be related to chronic infection with bacteria known as *Chlamydia pneumoniae*. This study is being undertaken to investigate whether three months of the antibiotic azithromycin can help to resolve asthma symptoms long-term, perhaps eliminating the need for prolonged treatment with bronchodilator and steroid medications.

Dr. David Hahn, a family physician working through the Wisconsin Research and Education Network (WREN), is the principle investigator for the AZMATICS study. Dr.

Hahn is a widely-published expert on *Chlamydia pneumoniae* and its possible link to some cases of asthma.

AZMATICS is a randomized placebo-controlled study. In other words, people who meet the criteria for inclusion in the study and who agree to be subjects will be given either study drug, azithromycin or placebo. It will be unknown until the end of the study whether the tablets contain the antibiotic or whether they contain inactive placebo. This study design, known as randomized and double-blind, is a standard method for defining whether a new treatment is indeed valid and whether such therapy should be advocated for wider use.

Asthma is classified as intermittent, if it occurs only infrequently. It is classified as persistent if it occurs several times per week or more. AZMATICS will be a study done on individuals with persistent asthma, and also on individuals who have had a recent asthma attack (worsening symptoms requiring a doctor visit or emergency treatment, or hospitalization).

Subjects in AZMATICS will have follow-up surveys completed through the internet for one year. E-mail and internet access are thus a necessary part of participation.

People who are enrolled in this study must have a physician diagnosis of asthma. Measures of pulmonary function will need to be documented within two years of their enrollment. People cannot be admitted to the investigation if they are allergic to a class of antibiotics known as macrolides. Pregnancy and breastfeeding are also causes for exclusion from the study.

Individuals with asthma who feel they would be interested in this type of investigation should contact their physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner. An initial phone contact will be made to determine whether you meet the criteria for being an appropriate subject for AZMATICS. Individuals who meet the criteria will

then have opportunity to meet with Dr. Leon Radant who will coordinate and lead the study at the Mile Bluff Medical Center. This meeting will be held for thorough discussion and informed consent on the benefits and potential risks of study participation. All ongoing medical care will be done through your regular healthcare provider.



Dr. Leon Radant

For further information on the AZMATICS research study, pick up a brochure at Mile Bluff Clinic in Mauston, or request that one be sent to you by mail.

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