

# News

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## **Allergist warns oil spill, clean up may pose health risk for people with serious breathing problems**

*Expert available to discuss how Gulf oil spill may affect residents*

Oil washing ashore and the chemicals used in the clean up may pose a health risk for those who have respiratory diseases according to an environmental allergy-asthma expert.

While most people will not be affected by the spill and clean up, allergist Jonathan Bernstein, MD, spokesperson for the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, warns that those with asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary dis-

ease (COPD) could be at risk, particularly from the oil-dispersing chemicals. (Dr. Bernstein is available for interviews.)

“Since the spill is now coming ashore, adults and children with respiratory diseases need to keep a close eye on their breathing, stay inside and call their allergist if they feel ill,” Dr. Bernstein said. “The oil-dispersing chemicals could also be harmful since we don’t know what they are or if they have a strong odor that may trigger symptoms.”

Those with asthma or other respiratory illnesses should consider seeing an allergist, a doctor with special expertise in treating asthma. An allergist locator is available at [AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org](http://AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org).