

Greetings from the World Allergy Organization,

As we prepare for the upcoming WAO meetings to take place this month during the annual meeting of the American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI), we also have begun to implement plans for World Allergy Week 2013.

World Allergy Week 2013

WAO is looking forward to hosting the third annual **World Allergy Week** from 8-14 April 2013. Last year, WAO discussed the theme of the “Rising global burden of allergic diseases and asthma” and promoted a multi-disciplinary, integrated approach to addressing the challenges. This year WAO has selected the theme of **Food Allergy – A Rising Global Health Problem**, for similar reasons. Food allergy is also rising in prevalence in both developed and developing countries, especially in children, and there is a need for greater awareness and understanding of food allergy in order to address a variety of issues related to the care of patients with food sensitivity.

WAO will reach out globally to share information and encourage dialogue and collaboration toward improved patient care and quality of life for those who suffer from food allergies. There are problems to be addressed in many countries throughout the world such as the *lack of* standardized national ‘anaphylaxis action plans’ for food allergy, *limited access* to adrenaline autoinjectors, and the lack of food labeling laws. Moreover, some countries have standardized action plans but no ready access to autoinjectors; others have autoinjectors but no standardized action plans. The WAO Communications Council under the Chairmanship of Professor Motohiro Ebisawa, in collaboration with WAO Leadership, is working hard to prepare for the week.

World Allergy Week is an opportunity for your allergy society to raise awareness of food allergy concerns and the specific issues that affect your communities. We hope you will join us during World Allergy Week and conduct outreach activities targeted to patients, parents, school teachers, counselors and food preparers, health ministries, medical schools, policymakers and the general public for the benefit of the patient. WAO will provide resources to its member societies for use in local, national and regional activities, and these materials will be available online at www.worldallergyweek.org.

Several international press events are being scheduled to address this issue in more detail. I encourage all of you to collaborate in this global effort to highlight the rising occurrence of food allergies and increase awareness of it in your communities. During previous years, many societies have reached out to the press, radio and television media, offering their time in interviews, or they have organized patient education events, provided workshops and seminars in medical schools, participated via social media activities, and many other creative opportunities. WAO has made available online a portfolio of past events and contributions to World Allergy Week. For ideas, follow the links to 2012 and 2011 at www.worldallergyweek.org.

This year, WAO will expand its coverage of World Allergy Week 2013 to its facebook and twitter accounts. We would like to hear from you. Tell us what your society, practice or you as an individual are planning to do to raise awareness of the rising global problem of food allergy. Contact us through email (info@worldallergy.org), facebook ([worldallergyorg](https://www.facebook.com/worldallergyorg)) and twitter ([@worldallergy](https://twitter.com/worldallergy), [#worldallergyweek](https://twitter.com/worldallergyweek)).

We hope that you will start your activities today by adding the World Allergy Week 2013 logo to your websites and linking it to www.worldallergyweek.org and that you will promote it in your newsletters, journals, and email communications to your members.

The official logo of World Allergy Week 2013 is now available for download from WAO at www.worldallergy.org.

Upcoming WAO Meetings

WAO is very excited to participate in the Annual Meeting of the AAAAI, which will be held in San Antonio, Texas, USA, from 22-26 February. The WAO Board of Directors will convene as well as several Councils, Committees, and Working Groups.

WAO is pleased to jointly host, with AAAAI, the **World Allergy Forum** on 24 February from 10.45 to 12.00 on the Concourse Level, Room 217AB, in the Convention Center on the topic of "Advances in Tolerance Induction to Allergens". WAO would also like to thank Novartis for their continued support of the World Allergy Forum.

We are also delighted to host a **Member Society Forum** on Monday, 25 February from 14.00 to 15.30, in the Grand Hyatt – Crocket A&B Rooms. This will be an opportunity to learn about the latest initiatives of WAO and to participate, network and transform your ideas into action by representing your Society in discussions with the WAO Board of Directors. I hope to see all of you there.

We look forward to seeing you at the EAACI-WAO World Allergy and Asthma Congress 2013 in Milan (22-26 June). To stay up-to-date on the latest information about the Congress, visit www.eaaci-wao2013.com.

Sincere regards,

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President, World Allergy Organization