

ANNOUNCEMENT

For Immediate Release
9 March 2015

Media Contact: Samantha Machart
smachart@worldallergy.org
+1 414 276 1791



World Allergy Week 2015 will address the impact of airway allergies on patient quality of life

World Allergy Organization emphasizes link between lower and upper airways in allergic disease

Milwaukee, WI. – The World Allergy Organization (WAO) will host World Allergy Week from 13-19 April, 2015, together with its 95 national Member Societies, to address the topic of “Airway Allergies – The Human and Economic Burden”. Experts will explain the links between the lower and upper airways and stress the need for integrated management strategies.

Allergic rhinitis is the most common allergic disease, affecting between 10 and 40 percent of the population worldwide, especially in children, and its prevalence is increasing worldwide [1]. The World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated that about 400 million people suffer from allergic rhinitis, and 300 million from asthma worldwide; with the current rising trends asthma sufferers will reach 400 million by 2025. Allergic rhinitis occurs in approximately 80 percent of asthmatic patients. Forty percent of patients with allergic rhinitis also have asthma. Moreover, patients with allergic rhinitis have an increased risk of developing asthma which is leading to an increased human and economic burden [1-5].

“There is indeed a need for more awareness of the links between rhinitis and asthma as well as an improved global management readily applicable to primary care and patients,” according to Lanny Rosenwasser, President of the World Allergy Organization, “Allergic rhinitis and co-morbid asthma can have a significant impact on patients, family members, and society at large. Airway allergies affect multiple parameters including quality of life, physical, psychological, and social interactions, and they have financial consequences. The monetary costs of asthma are substantial and include both direct medical costs and indirect non-medical costs.”

Professor Motohiro Ebisawa, WAO Treasurer and Chair of the WAO Communications Committee said, “Many of the WAO Member Societies will organize local educational and informational events that focus on airway allergies that affect their communities, especially related to the socio-economic burden. Everyone with an interest in airway allergies can participate by contacting their national allergy societies and local advocacy groups.” WAO has compiled a list of resources on airway allergies and links to patient advocacy organizations, and will continually post World Allergy Week activities at: www.worldallergy.org.

1. Pawankar R, Sanchez-Borges M, Bonini S, and Kaliner MA. “Allergic Rhinitis, Allergic Conjunctivitis, and Rhinosinusitis,” Section 2.1 in *WAO White Book on Allergy Update 2013*, Editors R Pawankar, GW Canonica, ST Holgate, RF Lockey, M Blaiss. (World Allergy Organization, 2013), pp 27-33.

http://www.worldallergy.org/definingthespecialty/white_book.php

2. Holgate ST, Canonica GW, Baena-Cagnani CE, Casale TB, Zitt M, Nelson H, and Vichyanond P. “Asthma”, Section 2.2 in *WAO White Book on Allergy Update 2013*, Editors: R Pawankar, GW Canonica, ST Holgate, RF Lockey, M Blaiss. (World Allergy Organization, 2013), pp 34-38.

http://www.worldallergy.org/definingthespecialty/white_book.php

3. Naclerio RM and Pawankar R. “Allergic Rhinitis – Comorbid,” Section 18 in *Asthma: Comorbidities, Coexisting Conditions, and Differential Diagnosis*, Editors RF Lockey and DK Ledford with WAO, 2014, pp 231–243.

4. Pawankar R, Bunnag C, Chen Y, Fukuda T, Kim YY, Le LT, Huong le TT, O'Hehir RE, et al. Allergic rhinitis and its impact on asthma update (ARIA 2008)--western and Asian-Pacific perspective. *Asian Pac J Allergy Immunol* 2009 Dec; 27(4):237-43.

5. Pawankar R, Baena-Cagnani CE, Bousquet J, Walter Canonica G, Cruz AA, Kaliner MA, Lanier BQ. State of World Allergy Report 2008: Allergy and Chronic Respiratory Diseases. *World Allergy Organ J.* 2008 Jun 15; 1(Suppl 1)

About the World Allergy Organization

The World Allergy Organization (WAO) is an international alliance of 95 regional and national allergy, asthma and immunology societies. Through collaboration with its Member Societies WAO provides a wide range of educational and outreach programs, symposia and lectureships to allergists and clinical immunologists around the world and conducts initiatives related to clinical practice, service provision, and physical training in order to better understand and address the challenges facing allergy and immunology professionals worldwide. For more information, visit www.worldallergy.org.

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