



EAACI's 60 years celebration – Dedicated to allergy science, committed to your health

World's largest meeting on drug hypersensitivity presents newest research and clinical applications

- **Seventh biennial meeting on drug hypersensitivity (DH) brought together more than 500 leading specialists and researchers from all over the world**
- **Incorrect DH diagnosis and inadequate patient reporting may have serious negative outcomes in both outpatient and hospital care**
- **The last few years have brought many new insights about disease mechanisms and have dramatically changed the view of hypersensitivity reactions with better protocols for diagnosis and management**

Zurich, 25 April 2016 – The European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) held its seventh biannual Drug Hypersensitivity Meeting (DHM) in Malaga, Spain from 21-23 April. The meeting's main goal was to increase the understanding of drug hypersensitivity (DH), a topic regarded by many healthcare professionals as being insufficiently understood. Ever since the first meeting in 2004, DHM has been providing a unique multidisciplinary opportunity for clinicians, researchers and industry representatives to exchange knowledge and experience, and to share information about the unprecedented recent progress in this field.

Incorrect DH diagnosis occurs frequently and may have serious negative outcomes in both outpatient and hospital care. Often, inadequate patient reporting makes it difficult for physicians to prescribe the right kind of medication. Alternative medication is often more expensive and less effective than the original drug to which the patient reacted. To help clinicians select the correct medication, skin tests and laboratory tests are still insufficient, so a drug provocation test has to be performed in some cases.

Recently, science has gained many new insights that have dramatically changed how we view hypersensitivity reactions. The conventional wisdom would have us believe that all drug reactions could be explained by four simple types of immunologic reactions: allergy; cytotoxic, antibody-dependent; immune complex disease; and delayed-type hypersensitivity. Over the past few years, it has become clear that our immune system is able to orchestrate a much greater variety of different reaction patterns in order to "defend us" against "foreign" drugs, recognised as being a threat to the organism. These reaction patterns often involve a patient's T-lymphocytes, antigen-presenting cells and MHC class molecules (which are able to differentiate between "self" and "non-self"). Drugs have been shown to modify the signals that a patient's T-cells recognise as being a threat.

For some drugs, such as abacavir, a very efficient anti-HIV drug that once induced unpredictable severe systemic drug hypersensitivity reactions, simple skin testing and exclusion of patients with specific MHC molecules can eliminate these severe reactions. Joining forces among healthcare professionals is key. Professor Miguel Blanca, Head of the Allergy Service at the Carlos Haya Hospital in Malaga, Spain: "Drug allergy is an area of cooperation, not competition. A single research institute working alone will not be able to unravel the many open questions we still have in the area."



This year's meeting had an action-packed [programme](#). The highlights include new concepts on interaction between drugs and the immune system, a newly discovered mast cell receptor that may be responsible for non-allergic anaphylaxis, and how genetics help to predict the most severe skin and other organ reactions to drugs. The meeting also fleshed out some practical issues, such as which reactions drugs are able to produce, the most relevant drugs, hypersensitivity to specific drugs (e.g. biological agents), exploring the causes for false negative skin tests and provocation tests, the analysis of different strategies to battle hypersensitivity to penicillin and other beta lactams-indifferent geographical regions of the world. The [abstracts presented during the meeting](#) will be published in the Clinical and Translational Allergy Journal.

About EAACI

The European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) is a non-profit organisation active in the field of allergic and immunologic diseases such as asthma, rhinitis, eczema, occupational allergy, food and drug allergy, and anaphylaxis. EAACI was founded in 1956 in Florence and has become the largest medical association in Europe in the field of allergy and clinical immunology. It includes over 9,000 members from 121 countries, as well as 52 National Allergy Societies.

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