

Respiratory allergies are candidates for the “Major National Cause for 2011” label in France

“Understanding your allergy better
so you can fight it more effectively”.

**Today 1 in 4 French people suffer from respiratory allergies,
whereas the figure was only 4% in 1968**

The World Health Organization (WHO) ranks respiratory allergies (rhinitis and allergic asthma) as the fourth most common disease in the world. Today, they affect one in four people in France. In 15 to 20% of cases, allergic rhinitis is described as severe because it is recurrent in nature, has a major impact on quality of life and is resistant to symptomatic treatments.

These hereditary conditions – exacerbated by our evolving industrialized and urban modern society – are both a public health and social problem. However, although they represent a major health issue and are debilitating for sufferers, the general public as a whole is generally poorly informed about severe respiratory allergies and their repercussions.

In order to address the disease's lack of recognition, a collective led by the *Comité Français d'Observation des Allergies* (CFOA - French Committee for the Observation of Allergies) submitted an application proposing respiratory diseases in France as a “Major National Cause for 2011” to the Prime Minister on October 25, 2010.

Members of the collective supporting the cause of respiratory allergies

The collective members include:

- patient support groups, such as the **European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients Associations** (EFA), and in France **Asthme & allergies** (Asthma & Allergies).

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- scientific societies, such as the **European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology** (EAACI), the **Fédération Française d'Allergologie** (FFA – French Allergology Federation), the **Société Française d'Allergologie** (SFA – French Allergology Society), the **Société de Pneumologie de Langue Française** (SPLF – French-Language Pneumology Society), the **Société Française de Pédiatrie** (SFP – French Pediatrics Society), the **Société Française d'Oto-Rhino-Laryngologie** (French ENT Society), and the **Association Française de Rhinologie** (AFR – French Rhinology Association).
- school parents' associations, such as the **Fédération de Parents d'Elèves de l'Enseignement Public** (PEEP – Federation of Public Educational Establishment Parents),
- associations working in the field of child and student health, such as the **Association Française de Promotion de la Santé Scolaire et Universitaire** (AFPSSU – French Association for the Promotion of School and University Health),
- associations involved in air quality issues, such as the **Réseau National de Surveillance Aérobiologique** (RNSA – French National Aerobiological Monitoring Network),

A number of personalities are also supporting this application to have respiratory allergies recognized as a “Major National Cause for 2011”, including:

- **Doctor Christophe André**, psychiatrist and behavioral specialist,
- **Professor William Dab**, former Director General of Health, Titular Professor of the health and safety chair at the *Conservatoire national des arts et métiers* (CNAM),
- **Professor Daniel Vervloet**, pneumologist and allergist, President of the *Fédération Française d'Allergologie* (FFA),
- **Doctor Pham Thi**, pediatrician specializing in allergology and pneumology,
- Parliamentarians and local authorities, such as **Isabelle Debré** and **Jean-Pierre Door**, parliamentary representatives, and the **city of Montpellier**.

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Extending the scope of respiratory allergy recognition

Being labeled as a “Major National Cause for 2011” in France would raise the profile of respiratory allergies, focusing the public debate on a major health and social issue and improving information for sufferers.

About the Comité Français d'Observation des Allergies (CFOA)

The role of the CFOA, founded with the support of Stallergenes, a French biopharmaceutical laboratory specializing in respiratory allergies, is to study the economic and social impact of respiratory diseases on the French population, raise public awareness of the subject and involve players from the sector as well as public authorities in a concerted initiative to solve this public health and social problem.

For more information on the CFOA: www.comite-allergies.org

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