



## PRESS RELEASE

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*As part of its Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Campaign, the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) issues a European public declaration calling for increased awareness campaigns, increased access to emergency treatment, better allergy research resources and more stringent food labelling measures*

### **EAACI issues European Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Public Declaration**

- **EAACI calls on EU and national health policy makers to introduce food allergy education and information campaigns to raise awareness**
- **Clear food labelling policies that will help patients better manage their condition**
- **Availability to research funds to find a cure for food allergy and anaphylaxis**

**Zurich (Switzerland) 07.02.2013 – Today marks the launch of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology's (EAACI) Public Declaration, which calls on European, and national health policy makers to take up the cause of food allergy.**

This Public Declaration forms part of EAACI's 2012-2013 [Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Campaign](#). The goal of the campaign is to enhance knowledge of food allergy in the European community, as well as awareness on the sharp increase of food allergy and the triggers of anaphylaxis among policy makers and to educate the public on how to react in case of emergency. Throughout 2013, EAACI, Europe's largest allergy medical association, **will be reaching out to EU officials, providing recommendations and asking them to take concrete actions** to improve the management and treatment of food allergies and anaphylaxis.

17 million Europeans suffer from food allergy. Those countries currently showing the highest prevalence of food allergy include France, Germany and Italy with 3.5% of their respective populations suffering from the condition on a chronic basis.

| ESTIMATED OCCURRENCE OF FOOD ALLERGIES IN EU COUNTRIES |                      |                         |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------|
| EU COUNTRIES   | POPULATION (million) | FOOD ALLERGY OCCURRENCE |
| DENMARK  | 5.4                  | 1.6% (86.000)           |
| UNITED KINGDOM   | 60.9                 | 2% (1.200.000)          |
| GREECE   | 11                   | 2% (220.000)            |
| POLAND   | 38.2                 | 2,5% (950.000)          |
| THE NETHERLANDS  | 16.3                 | 2,5% (407.000)          |
| SPAIN  | 44.5                 | 3% (1.330.000)          |
| SWITZERLAND  | 7.5                  | 3% (225.000)            |
| ITALY  | 60.3                 | 3,5% (2.100.000)        |
| GERMANY  | 82.6                 | 3,5% (2.900.000)        |
| FRANCE   | 63.2                 | 3,5% (2.200.000)        |

“Current European statistics are worrying, especially given that there has been a seven-fold increase in hospital admissions for anaphylaxis in the past ten years” states Cezmi Akdis, EAACI President. **“The goal of EAACI’s Public Declaration is to inform and activate European legislators about food allergy, its prevalence and to provide a roadmap of the policy-level actions required to make a substantial improvement in the everyday lives of food allergy sufferers.”**

EAACI believes that effectively managed food allergy can only be achieved through education and prevention. Consequently, it is calling for much more concentrated effort on the part of the European Union and national health policy-makers alike, to introduce awareness campaigns, patient educational programmes and research programmes, which it believes would considerably improve food allergy and anaphylaxis management.

Whilst food allergy has reached alarming proportions, much is still unknown about its causes or how to treat it. A second pillar of EAACI’s Public Declaration aims at pushing for a **European-wide increase in food allergy research funding**. Several research areas that EAACI believes merit investigation include predisposition to allergy and the involvement of the innate and adaptive immune system. EAACI will push throughout 2013 to ensure that food allergy related projects are prioritised in the periodical call for applications under the Horizon 2020 research programme and the EU’s third public health programme.

In addition, EAACI aims to challenge certain aspects of **current EU food labelling directives**, which it feels, are insufficient in preventing the accidental consumption of allergens. Currently, some foods have the label “may contain peanuts” or “may contain milk” but this type of labelling (precautionary labelling) is not sufficiently regulated at the EU level. Labelling is an essential part of food allergy management for the sufferer and has an important impact on how they manage their diets. EAACI believes that the EU should set clear guidelines for labelling foodstuffs for allergens. This includes products which may contain allergen derivatives and should be clearly linked to the name of the allergen to avoid confusion. Additionally, to facilitate readability, EAACI advises that the typeset used to flag allergens should differ from the one used for other ingredients.

### FAAM 2013

Additional pillars and aspects of the Declaration will be unveiled during the launch at EAACI’s [Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Meeting](#) (FAAM) 2013 taking place in Nice, France today until Saturday, 9 February. This year’s event has received more than 200 abstracts and will host 700 specialists from clinics, food and technology scientists, regulatory authorities, and representatives from patient organisations. All scientific data will be published in one of the EAACI official’s Journal [Clinical and Translational Allergy](#).

## **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 7,700 members from 121 countries, and all of the National Allergy Societies from Europe.

[www.eaaci.org](http://www.eaaci.org)

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