



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

(French, Italian, German and Spanish version available on www.eaaci.org/eaacimedia.html)

New research suggests a strong link between childhood asthma and air pollution

Athens, Greece 15.10.2013 – Researchers will reveal the strongest evidence to date that air pollution is biologically linked to childhood asthma at the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) Pediatric Allergy and Asthma meeting, [PAAM 2013](#), in Athens, Greece from October 17 to 19.

Data released jointly by the Epidemiology And Allergic and Respiratory Diseases (EPAR) Department from Sorbonne University and the Institut National de le Santé et de la Recherche-Médicale (INSERM), both based in Paris, indicate that air pollution may cause new cases of asthma. They also specify that evidence from toxicological studies, together with information from genes associated with asthma, suggest the link between air pollution and asthma is biologically plausible.

The new findings also reveal that an average of 1 in 7 children living within 75 metres of a busy road are likely to develop asthma (www.aphekom.eu). In areas with the heaviest air pollution, 1 in 4 children could potentially develop asthma.

Additionally, outdoor levels of air pollutants continue to aggravate asthma in sufferers despite industrial air pollution generally decreasing.

Indoor air pollution is caused by unvented gas or kerosene heaters, tobacco use, solvents, painting adhesives and other similar materials. Indoor air pollution is increasing, and with individuals spending on average almost 90 per cent of their time inside, this is also cause for concern.

All these findings come in the “Year of Air” which has seen the EU push for stronger air quality laws. However, at this time no major measure has been taken concerning asthma and other similar diseases.

“What these results help illustrate is that environmental factors such as air emissions, against which prevention is possible, can be directly linked to diseases such as asthma,” Dr Isabella Annesi-Maesano, Research Director at INSERM and Head of the EPAR Department said. “With air pollution currently second on the World Health Organisation’s Global Ranking of Risk Factors, asthma and other similar illnesses need to be taken seriously.”



"It is studies such as this one which help underline just how important it is to protect children from environmental risks," continued EAACI President Professor Nikos Papadopoulos. "We need everybody, but most importantly the EU, to start paying more attention to both air pollution levels and respiratory allergic diseases, in order to make significant strides towards improving the lives of children."

PAAM 2013

PAAM is the largest EAACI Focused Meeting, attracting over 1,000 participants. As the premier pediatric allergy and asthma event of the year, it covers topics from anaphylaxis, food allergy and asthma to rhinitis, eczema and immunotherapy.

"Allergy, asthma and health aspects relating to them are issues young people face that are often misdiagnosed by physicians," Professor Papadopoulos added. "What PAAM continues to do is illustrate how sufferers not only from Europe, but around the world, can combat some of the fastest growing global diseases. It is the biggest event of its kind and I hope that the success and knowledge gained from this meeting continues into 2015 when PAAM will be held in Berlin, Germany."

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 7,800 members from 121 countries, as well as 42 National Allergy Societies.

For more information, please contact:

Macarena Guillamón
EAACI Headquarters
Genferstrasse, 21
8002 Zurich - Switzerland
Tel: + 41 44 205 55 32
Mobile: +41 79 892 82 25
macarena.guillamon@eaaci.org
www.eaaci.org