

PRESS RELEASE
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A focus on unmet needs in severe asthma

More than 75% of the asthma patient care costs are attributed to severe asthma cases, which constitute 10% of the overall asthmatic population

Gothenburg, Sweden 12.10.2012 – Over 150 delegates from more than 30 countries are meeting in Gothenburg, Sweden, at the International Severe Asthma Forum, ISAF, 2012 organised by the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, EAACI. ISAF 2012 aims to respond to the need for a more rational approach to the treatment of severe asthma.

Present management practices have considerable limitations in a relatively small, but important subgroup of patients with severe asthma. "Around 10% of the overall asthmatic population suffer from ongoing symptoms, frequent exacerbations and reduced quality of life", explained Professor Cezmi Akdis, EAACI President, "however they account for more than 75% of the costs attributable to asthma". A single asthma exacerbation, requiring extra medication and possible emergency treatment and hospitalisation, can increase the annual treatment cost more than 3-fold.

Proper diagnosis and treatment is fundamental to improve the quality of life of this group of patients. EAACI experts agree that standard treatment with inhaled corticosteroids and long-acting beta agonists (LABAs) is insufficiently effective in many patients with severe asthma. Young children, particularly those with virus-driven asthma are often poorly managed with currently available medications. "There is a need for novel management strategies in specific forms of severe asthma; to recognise asthma as a heterogeneous disease and to identify properly the different disease mechanisms involved in patients with severe asthma", added Jan Lötval, ISAF 2012 Chair, "only in this way, we will begin to understand what is driving severe asthma".

About the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology

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 worldwide, and all of the National Allergy Societies from Europe.

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