

UPDATE

Annual Congress of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI)

More than 8.000 delegates from around the world will share the latest advances in allergies and immunological diseases

Allergy is a public health problem of pandemic proportions that affects more than 150 million people in Europe and is the most frequent chronic disease¹

The Pru p 3 protein, the main peach allergen, can help us to understand how food allergies develop in order to provide an adequate treatment

A study on asthma indicated that the first three years of life are crucial in the loss of lung function

Copenhagen (Denmark), June 8, 2014 - More than 8.000 delegates from more than 100 different countries will attend the 33 edition of the annual congress of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) held in Copenhagen (Denmark) from the 7 - 11 of June. The attendees of the congress will discuss new advances in the field of allergy, an illness that affects **more than 150 million people in Europe**, which makes it the most common chronic disease¹.

The studies that will be presented, some of which are currently unpublished, will cover different aspects related to allergy, from allergic manifestations such as asthma and food allergy, to methods of treatment such as immunotherapy, and areas such as dermatology and pediatrics.

"The scientific programme of the Copenhagen Congress will be more forward thinking and innovative than ever before and we expect participants to return home with new skills for treating their patients, new ideas and inspiration for research. Our vision is to continue serving as the major global platform for education, promotion of scientific excellence and advocacy on everything related to allergy", explains **Nikolaos G. Papadopoulos, EAACI President**.

An important step in the treatment of food allergy

Among these, a study conducted in the **Centro de Biotecnología y Genómica de Plantas (Centre for Biotechnology and Plant Genomics) of the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid** (Spain), analysed the capacity of a food allergen from peaches to cross the intestinal barrier. This would help to explain its considerable allergenic properties and its rapid dissemination throughout the body, since the intestinal absorption of proteins from food may result in allergic reactions.

Specifically, the study investigated the interaction between the protein Pru p 3, the main peach allergen, and the intestinal epithelium, analysing the kinetics of transport and cell response that it produces. This protein was selected because it is considered a prototype of the family of allergens known as LTPs (Lipid Transfer Proteins), which is widely extended throughout vegetable-based products (fruit, vegetables, cereals, dried fruits, pollens).

"The results obtained represent a step toward clarifying the importance of Pru p 3 as a sensitizer. The follow-up carried out on this protein brings us a better understanding of the way in which food allergies develop, which can help in the development of specific treatments for such allergies," states **Cristina Gómez Casado, the lead author of the study.**

Furthermore, current treatment consists of simply avoiding ingestion of the protein, a practice that is not effective due to the possibility of cross reaction: that is, the reaction to foods that contain proteins of the same family.

Early prevention of asthma

Knowledge about timing of lung function deterioration is essential for prevention of respiratory illnesses like asthma, which would have a significant impact on the health of the general population and the social costs generated by this disease, whose prevalence is 5%².

However, the practical difficulties in measuring lung function in preschool age limited the adoption of preventive measures so far. Now, a study of 341 children from four weeks to seven years suggests that the first three years of life are critical for the loss of lung function associated with asthma.

"The unique strength of our study is that the children were followed closely from birth with repeated measurements of lung function and registration of symptoms. Our data suggest that the lung function deficit associated with asthma develops in the first three years of life, and future research should therefore focus on this critical period of life", says **Professor Hans Bisgaard, Copenhagen Prospective Studies on Asthma in Childhood (COPSAC).**

The results show that children with asthma at age seven had developed increased airway resistance before three years of age, independent of neonatal lung function.

The extensive program of presentations in the Annual EAACI Congress includes abstracts of great scientific value. For more information, visit www.sessionplan.com/eaaci2014.

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 47 National Allergy Societies.

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2. Global Atlas of Asthma. European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI). 2013