



Physician Allergy Times

Special point of interest:

- Grapefruit juice can be a deadly combination when taken with certain medications. More than 50 medications, including Allegra, have been shown to adversely interact with grapefruit juice. Grapefruit is metabolized by the same enzyme in the liver that is needed to break down these drugs and results in a system overload.

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Volume 1, Issue 2

Summer 2005

1st Annual Allergy Conference and Training Seminar (ACT 2005)

This fall, Commonwealth Medical Laboratories will host our first annual allergy conference in Baltimore, MD at the Tremont Plaza Hotel. A recent survey to our customers indicated an interest in the following topics: food allergies and intolerance, mold, sublingual immunotherapy, managed care reimbursement, advanced and basic RAST testing information, etc. You told us what you were interested in, and we listened.

Mark your calendars to reserve the weekend of November 5-6, 2005, to gain valuable hands-on experience and training about these topics and much more at the Allergy Conference and Training seminar (ACT 2005). Our Course Director and Keynote Speaker, Jeffrey Powell, M.D., DDS, FACS, is Board Certified in Otolaryngology and is the senior partner and founder of Eastern Virginia Ear, Nose & Throat Specialists. He and many other speakers who are experts in their respective fields will round out our 2-day event. A "Meet the Speakers" list is now available for your review until the conference agenda has been finalized.



ACT will provide training and workshops that will assist you in treating allergies in your daily practice.

Baltimore offers many options for sightseeing, shopping and dining. The Tremont Plaza Hotel is conveniently located between the Inner Harbor and the historic district and offers a complementary shuttle service around town. For additional information about the Tremont Grand & Plaza Hotel, visit their website at www.tremonts.com.

Whether you're well versed in the field of allergy or just thinking of getting started, this conference has a lot to offer. For additional information or to register for the conference, call Carol Bennett at 800-222-5775.

We hope that you will be able to join us for the first of what we hope will be many more conferences to come.

Food Sensitization May Increase Asthma in Children

Researchers from Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York found that food sensitization, and likely food allergy, is highly prevalent in inner city children with asthma. Children were tested for specific IgE to the following food allergens: egg, milk, soy, peanut, wheat and fish. The results revealed that 45% of the children were allergic to at least one food allergen. These children had higher rates of hospitalizations and increased medication use.

Children sensitized specifically to soy and fish had significantly higher rates of hospitalization, emergency room visits and medication use. This is the first study to demonstrate a correlation between food sensitization and the severity of asthma symptoms. **Conclusion:** The presence of food sensitization may serve as a marker for identifying children with more severe asthma.

Journal of Allergy & Clinical Immunology, May 2005



"Ants can induce IgE-mediated bronchoconstriction regardless of sting in sensitized patients"

Ants May Cause Respiratory Allergy

"Ants should be taken into consideration as a cause of respiratory allergy in patients living in homes with visual evidence of infestation," according to a study published in the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology*. While there are numerous studies that discuss systemic reactions to an ant sting, few have discussed the direct role of ants in respiratory allergy. Dr. Cheol-Woo Kimm and his colleagues de-

scribe two patients with asthma who lived in homes with ant infestation. Both patients had positive skin test reactions to pharaoh ant extract, with high levels of specific IgE antibodies. The ELISA inhibition tests were positive for pharaoh ant, but not for *P chinensis*, cockroach, or house dust mite. Bronchial challenge with pharaoh ant induced typical early asthmatic reactions in one patient and dual asthmatic

reactions in the other patient.

"Ants can induce IgE-mediated bronchoconstriction regardless of sting in sensitized patients," concluded the authors.

"Further studies are needed to clarify the exact physical and biochemical properties of the allergenic components of pharaoh ant antigens."

Ann Allergy Asthma Immunol.
2005;94:301-306

"Something as simple as leaving the beds unmade can remove moisture so the mites will dehydrate and die."

Relax—Don't Make Those Beds

By not making your bed in the morning, you can help prevent allergies. Dust mites thrive in moist, warm conditions so what better place for them to make themselves at home than in your bed. Scales of human skin provide food and tightly drawn sheets and blankets provide the warmth and moisture that they need to survive.

The average bed can be called home to as many as 1.5 million house dust mites. Their survival is dependant on taking in water from the moist atmosphere created from the sheets and mattress.

When the sheets and blankets are tossed aside and the bed left unmade, the exposure to the air creates a dry condition

that will kill the dust mites.

Dr. Pretlove along with experts from the University College London and Cambridge University, are tracking how changes in the home can reduce dust mites in beds.

Future studies will alter heating, ventilation and insulation to see how it affects the bugs.



Shopping for allergy-free foods will be easier after January 2006.

New "Plain Language" Food Labeling Law

The Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA), passed by Congress will take effect in January 2006. The regulation is intended to make life easier for people who suffer from food allergies. Currently, consumers are often confused by complicated product labeling, for example "casein" instead of "milk." The new law will require common

language for the presence of any of the eight major food allergens—milk, egg, peanut, tree nut, fish, shellfish, wheat and soy. Companies will also be required to indicate any major food allergens used in flavorings, additives and colorings.

There may be an unintentional result if food manufacturers follow the labeling law to the

letter because trace amounts of these foods that were previously unlisted will now be posted. This will result in more diet restriction than ever before.

Regardless of this undesired outcome that will further narrow restricted diets, the benefit to those with food allergies will be huge.

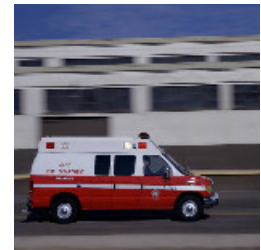
Lack of Clear Definition for Anaphylaxis Puts Millions at Risk

A new report released in *The Journal of Allergy & Clinical Immunology* set out to clearly define "anaphylaxis." "The current lack of agreement on what constitutes anaphylaxis has resulted in misdiagnosis, inconsistent treatment and lack of education of affected patients. It has hampered research efforts," said Anne Munoz-Furlong, Founder & CEO of FAAN and co-author of the

report. Anaphylaxis is under-recognized and under-treated in both the pre-hospital setting and emergency departments. In a review of 19,122 emergency room visits, 17 cases of anaphylaxis were identified but only four were appropriately coded and diagnosed.

The study's lead author, Hugh Sampson, M.D., Professor of Pediatrics and head of the Jaffe Food Allergy Institute at Mount

Sinai Medical Center, said "there is a constellation of signs and symptoms in anaphylaxis that has led to inconsistencies in how anaphylaxis is defined in published studies." The report sets forth recommendations on diagnostic guidelines that take into account the variability of signs and symptoms by viewing anaphylaxis as a continuum with markers for diagnosing its degree of severity.



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The 2005 Spring Allergy Capitals™ Rankings

Rankings for the Allergy Capitals™ are based on data from three factors: Annual Pollen Scores, Utilization of Medicine per Patient and the number of Board Certified Allergists per patient. Weights were applied to each group of factors as an indicator of how it affects the quality of life. This year's top ten ranking Capitals that are

the most challenging places to live if you have spring allergies are:

1. Lexington, KY (16)*
2. Little Rock, AR (8)*
3. Chattanooga, TN (14)*
4. Louisville, KY (3)*
5. Johnson City, TN (26)*
6. Greenville, SC (19)*
7. Richmond, VA (63)*
8. Charlotte, NC (4)*
9. Jackson, MS (12)*
10. St. Louis, MO (5)*

All rankings can be found at www.AllergyCapitals.com.

* Indicates last year's ranking.

"The most challenging places to live if you have spring allergies."

Histamine in Foods

Many foods contain or cause the body to release histamine. Histamine rich foods include: anchovies, avocados, beer, canned foods, fermented cheeses, ciders, eggplant, fermented beverages, fermented foods, fish, herring, jams and preserves, mackerel, processed meats, salsami, sardines, sauerkraut,

sausage, some oriental foods, sour cream, spinach, tomatoes, tuna, vermouth, vinegars, wines, yeast extract, yogurt.

Foods that cause the body to release histamines include:

Alcohol, bananas, certain nuts, chocolate, eggs, fish, milk, papayas, pineapple,

shellfish, strawberries and tomatoes.

If high concentrations of histamine are ingested it may lead to histamine poisoning. This is also known as Scombroid Poisoning. High levels of histamine can occur in spoiled foods such as fish products.



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Leaders in Allergy Testing

Commonwealth Medical
Laboratories, Inc.

4228 Aiken Drive
Warrenton, VA 20187
Phone: 800-222-5775
Fax: 540-428-2905

We're on the Web
www.allergytest.com

NEW GUIDELINES FOR SHIPPING DIAGNOSTIC SPECIMENS

New directives issued from the International Air Transportation Authority (IATA) and the Department of Transportation (DOT) have mandated a change in the packaging required to ship diagnostic specimens. Effective immediately, all requests for supplies will be filled with certified kits that meet these new requirements. Please **DO NOT** write on the outside of the boxes or place any additional labels on this box since it could then compromise the packaging. After you have placed your specimens and paperwork into the box, place the box into the pre-addressed, pre-paid outer wrap (i.e., UPS, USPS, etc.)

If you have any questions about shipping your specimens to us, please do not hesitate to give us a call at 800-222-5775. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation and understanding.

Guidance for Clinicians on the Management of Mold Exposure

Physicians are faced with a rapidly growing number of patients who are troubled by indoor contaminants. There is now a new book published by the Center for Indoor Environments and Health at UConn Health Center to assist in identifying patients with illnesses that may be related to mold or other indoor contaminants. The book contains questionnaires, assessment tools and references to assist physicians in identifying mold related problems at home or in the workplace.



"Something is going on in our indoor environment that is making us sick," says Eileen Story, MD, MPH, one of the book's authors.

Counseling guidelines and references to books and pamphlets that can assist patients in eliminating moisture problems are also included.

"We know that exposure to

mold and other contaminants in indoor environments may adversely affect a person's health," says Paula Scheneck, MPH, an author of the book. "We spend nearly 90 percent of our time indoors."

This book is available to view (and print) online at the UConn Health Center Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine's Center for Indoor Environments and Health website:

www.oehc.uchc.edu/clinser/indoor.htm