

ANNOUNCEMENT
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**World Allergy Week 2013 Will Focus on the Rising Global Health Problem of Food Allergy
*Heaviest Burden is on Children***

Milwaukee. The World Allergy Organization (WAO) will host its annual World Allergy Week from 8-14 April, 2013, together with its 93 national Member Societies, to address the topic of “Food Allergy – A Rising Global Health Problem,” and its growing burden on children.

Globally, 220-250 million people may suffer from food allergy [1], and the occurrence of food allergies continues to rise in both developed and developing countries, especially in children. This year WAO plans to highlight the need for greater awareness and understanding of food allergy as well as the exchange of ideas and collaboration in order to address a variety of safety and quality-of-life issues related to the care of patients with food sensitivity. Activities will include international teleconferences with experts presenting information about global food allergy concerns and answering questions immediately afterward.

According to Professor Ruby Pawankar, President of the World Allergy Organization, “There are problems that need to be addressed in many countries throughout the world such as the lack of awareness of food allergies, lack of standardized national anaphylaxis action plans for food allergy, limited or no access to adrenaline autoinjectors, and the lack of food labeling laws. Moreover, some countries have standardized action plans but no ready access to autoinjectors; others have autoinjectors but no standardized action plans. These circumstances can be improved with the distribution of information and resources for physicians, patients, parents, schools, health ministries, and throughout communities and by a call to action to policy makers.”

“As in previous years, many of the national Member Societies of WAO will organize local events and programs around food allergy issues that specifically affect their communities,” said Professor Motohiro Ebisawa, WAO Board of Director and Chair of the Communications Council. WAO is providing information about food allergy online at www.worldallergyweek.org and will track activities of its Member Societies. “Everyone with an interest in food allergy can participate by contacting their national allergy societies and food allergy advocacy groups,” said Professor Ebisawa. A list of organizations is also available on the website.

[1] Fiocchi A, Sampson HA et al. “Food Allergy”, Section 2.5 in *WAO White Book on Allergy*, Editors: R Pawankar, GW Canonica, ST Holgate, RF Lockey (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: World Allergy Organization, 2011), pp 47-53.

About the World Allergy Organization

The *World Allergy Organization (WAO)* is an international alliance of 93 regional and national allergy, asthma and immunology societies. Through collaboration with its Member Societies WAO provides a wide range of educational and outreach programs, symposia and lectureships to allergists and clinical immunologists around the world and conducts initiatives related to clinical practice, service provision, and physical training in order to better understand and address the challenges facing allergy and immunology professionals worldwide. For more information, visit www.worldallergy.org.

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