SCIENCES

The UCB Institute of Allergy

Allergic: To be or not to be?
When patients can describe their symptoms clearly, you can make an accurate diagnosis.

Allergic: To be or not to be? That’s the question!

Today, 15% to 30% of the general population suffer from an allergy. If left unchecked, in 30 years’ time things may get worse.

While the number of allergy cases diagnosed continues to soar (1,2), even greater are the number of allergic patients who are unaware of their problem.

According to researchers, allergies should be a source of growing concern and will increasingly plague us all in the future. In light of this growing epidemic, most European health care officials view allergic diseases as a leading public health problem of epidemic proportions (3).

In nearly every industrialised nation, the prevalence and incidence of allergic diseases — including allergic rhinitis and asthma — have risen dramatically and continuously over the last thirty years. If left unchecked, things can get worse:

- We all may be sneezing, scratching, and sniffling because of an allergy!
- As a physician, you are likely to have first-hand experience of the scale and scope of the problem, seeing a rise in the number of patients complaining about allergy-related symptoms.
- More worrying though is the growing number of patients slipping through the net. These patients often mistake their allergy symptoms as harmless and remain undiagnosed. Without proper management, the natural evolution of the disease can, in some cases, worsen prognosis.

The UCB Institute of Allergy (IOA) aims to reverse the current trend in allergy. To help you and your patients, IOA has developed a patient questionnaire for your waiting room, to help identify who may be suffering from allergy.

The questionnaire is not intended as a substitute for your own investigations and diagnosis, but it should facilitate screening and therefore reduce the risks of this disease. It will be particularly useful in routine daily practice, helping patients to better describe their symptoms in terms of chronic nature and severity.

It is a collaborative tool which can help you to build a closer relationship with your patients and may help to speed accurate diagnosis. Furthermore, armed with more precise information you can determine the best course of treatment that will enhance your patient’s quality of life and, when needed, decide to refer patients with severe or chronic allergies to the allergist of your choice.

The UCB Institute of Allergy:

The patient questionnaire is just one of many activities developed or sponsored by The UCB Institute of Allergy (IOA). They are designed to improve allergy prevention and treatment by providing health care professionals and the general public with continuous up-to-date scientific information and/or education about allergies. Through a series of informative actions like the waiting room campaign, IOA seeks to help combat the onslaught of this growing pandemic of allergic diseases while relieving the discomfort and suffering of the many millions of allergy victims.

The UCB Institute of Allergy provides people interested in allergy with:

Multimedia Guide to Allergy:
Teaching tool for family practitioners and health care professionals designed to explain the basic mechanisms of allergy and immunology, including case histories to solve and diagnostic help.

Various leaflets and brochures:

- For physicians: up-dated scientific brochures written and validated by IOA experts.
  - Rhinitis, Illustrated Differential Diagnosis
  - Allergic Rhinitis: Epidemiology, Comorbidity and Health Related Quality of Life.
  - New Paradigms in Atopy Prevention?
  - Why do we need a new classification for allergic rhinitis?

- For teachers and parents: information written in co-operation with experts and education specialists.
  - Of Myths, Mites and Runny noses... Allergies at School.
  - Meet the Champ! (sport and allergy).
  - Atopic Dermatitis in Children: how to take care of them.
  - Allergies: the more you know the less you suffer.
  - Allergic: to be or not to be? ...Rhinitis

Games around allergy

Videos:
- Are you Aware of Allergy?
- HELP... I am allergic (difficulties for allergic children at school).
- Allergy, a Match to Win! (sport and allergy).
- Who’s been sleeping in your pillow?
- Allergic: to be or not to be? ...Rhinitis

It is through all these initiatives, and others still in development, that The UCB Institute of Allergy contributes to improving the quality of life of allergic patients and to reversing current trends in allergies. Therefore, if we all join our forces, in 30 years’ time, fewer of us may suffer from an allergy.

For more information on allergies and IOA, contact your national section or: http://www.theucbinstituteofallergy.com
Division of UCB S.A., The UCB Institute of Allergy (IOA) is an independent, European and not-for-profit organisation, created in 1987 to combat allergy.

In response to the international epidemic of this disease, the Institute’s objective is to implement all the resources necessary to raise awareness of allergy as a major health issue amongst the general public, patients, health care professionals and public authorities.

Under the supervision of a Scientific Advisory Board made up of eminent European specialists in the field of allergy, IOA has initiated many actions. These aim to inform and educate about allergy, to improve prevention, to promote research, to analyse the current situation and to define key actions to be taken over the coming years. Moreover IOA favours cooperation between various allergy related organisations. The Institute is present all around Europe with 20 national sections and in South Africa.

The Institute’s web site (http://www.theucbinstituteofallergy.com) and central membership library provide members with current relevant information and publications about allergy. For the general public, schools and children, IOA has produced videos (e.g. “Who’s sleeping in your pillow?”, “Allergic: to be or not to be?...Rhinitis”), educational games and other information material. IOA also organises and holds meetings, symposia, conferences, panel discussions and offers “Travel Grants & Scholarship Awards” to young researchers.

As a result of these activities, The UCB Institute of Allergy hopes to forestall the sobering prediction of certain epidemiologists: In 30 years’ time, everyone may be allergic... Unless we act now!