

PREFACE

Allergic diseases are affecting the lives of more than one billion people worldwide. With an epidemic rise during the last 60 years, their prevalence is expected to reach up to 4 billion in 2050s. Because of immense numbers of affected individuals, the general public confronts huge direct and indirect costs with major effects on macroeconomics due to health-care, loss of productivity and absenteeism of patients. Unfortunately, high number of unmet needs due to missing scientific knowledge in disease mechanisms, prevention, patient care, and social determinants remain to be resolved.

To tackle this huge global health problem, we as the EAACI decided to develop the "Global Atlas of Allergy" as a follow up of our "Global Atlas of Asthma" which was launched last year. With this Atlas, we aimed to gather evidence to call attention to the burden of allergic diseases; to warrant their recognition as a main concern in national health strategies; to reveal their priority for research; to describe environmental factors; to evaluate the best ways to prevent and control allergies; to provide guidance on how to overcome barriers; to alert the political bodies to ensure global management approaches.

The EAACI Global Atlas of Allergy contains 139 chapters written by 183 authors with 274 illustrations and 100 tables. It is developed as a desktop reference for multisectoral usage covering all aspects of allergic diseases from allergens, epidemiology, risk factors and molecular and cellular mechanisms to their management, major current problems in allergies and associated diseases, prevention and control of allergic diseases. In addition, the Atlas will offer an educational tool and a desktop reference for medical students, allied health workers, primary care physicians, medical industry, policy makers, patient organizations and specialists dealing with allergies and co-morbid diseases. We would like to thank all of the authors for their contributions.

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