



Making the connection: Allergies and Asthma

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Speaker Disclosure

Amy CaJacob, MD

- Does not intend to discuss any commercial products or services
- Does not intend to discuss non-FDA approved uses of products/providers of services
- Does not have a relevant financial relationship with any commercial interests.



Objectives

At the conclusion of this internet enduring material activity you will be able to:

- Identify and reduce relevant allergens/irritants that exacerbate the asthmatic airway.
- Restate the link between allergies and asthma
- Discuss the different methods of allergy testing.



Allergies and Asthma: Establishing the Link

- Aim: to identify and reduce relevant allergens/irritants that exacerbate the asthmatic airway
 - Asthma at ANY level of severity
 - Focus on INDOOR inhalant allergens



Outdoor Allergens

- Pollens
 - Tree (mid-February to April)
 - Grass (May, June)
 - Weed (August to October)
- Clinical history is often sufficient to diagnose seasonal allergic rhinitis



Indoor “Perennial” Allergens

- Danders – Cat, Dog
- Dust Mite
- Cockroach
- Molds (ie: Alternaria)
- Recommend skin or in-vitro testing



Irritants

- Tobacco exposure
 - Either primary or secondary
- Diesel exhaust fumes
- Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC’s)
- Occupational exposures



Skin Prick Testing

- No age limit!
- Results available within 20 minutes
- Less \$\$ than in-vitro testing
- Equally as sensitive, more specific

☛ Small risk of systemic reaction



In vitro Testing

- Advantages
 - Results not affected by antihistamine use
 - Wider availability
 - Endless possibilities!
- Disadvantages
 - Less specific
 - One to two weeks until results



The Allergic Airway

- Identifying and controlling allergic sensitizations leads to...
 - ↓ airway inflammation, symptoms, medication use
 - ↑ quality of life, ACT scores
- Consider allergen immunotherapy at any level of asthma severity!
 - Start shots at >5 years of age



Natural History

- Age to environmental sensitization:
 - Perennial allergens ~1 year
 - Seasonal allergens ~18 months
- No age limit for skin prick or in vitro testing
- Environmental allergies tend to decline with time



To complete the process for CME
please return to:
“POST-TEST” and “EVALUATION”
on the ACHIA website for this module

