

ASTHMA & ALLERGY

BULLETIN

ASTHMA AND ALLERGY FOUNDATION OF AMERICA • NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER • VOL. 27, No. 2

Action Alert: Speak up now to protect your family

Contact your U.S. Senators and ask them to sign on to legislation in support of clean air to breathe and having epinephrine on hand at all schools. Tell *your* story: why is this law important to you and your family?

See www.senate.gov for how to reach your Senators. Contact AAFA New England if you would like more details about these issues.

The **Clean Air Act**, a 40-year-old bipartisan law that protects your family against air pollution, is under attack in Congress. Poor air quality is a common asthma trigger. New England states have some of the highest asthma rates in the country, and need federal agencies to help limit our exposure to smog from polluters. Ask your Senator to fight for healthy air, to prevent school and work absences, emergency room visits and hospitalizations, and lower health care costs due to asthma.

The **School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act** (S. 1884) would provide incentives for states to pass laws requiring schools to have a supply of "stock" epinephrine injectors on hand that can be used for anyone in an emergency – not only those who have their own prescription. This could save a life if someone's epinephrine is not immediately accessible, and is also important because about 25% of the epinephrine administrations in schools are to students or staff members who did not have a known allergy.

RESEARCH UPDATE

Can We Help Children "Outgrow" Milk Allergy?

By Frank J. Twarog, MD, PhD

Allergy to cow's milk protein is one of the most common food allergies in young children, occurring in 1-3% of this age group. In the past, this sensitivity "resolved" rapidly; by six years of age the majority of children had "outgrown" their milk allergy.

A study from Johns Hopkins, however, found that approximately 20% of cow's milk-sensitive individuals continue to have allergy into mid-adolescence. The reason for this change cannot be explained.

Previous studies have found that children who could tolerate heated milk were more likely to have "transient sensitization," meaning that they eventually were no longer allergic. Children with more severe allergy tended to react even to heated milk products.

In a new study, investigators at Mount Sinai in New York studied 88 cow's milk-allergic children. Of these, 65 tolerated milk baked into muffins without any adverse effects.

The initial baked milk challenge was performed in their clinical center. Children were monitored throughout these challenges and for 2-4 hours after completion of the procedure.

Over a period of 37 months (range 8-75 months), 60% of those who tolerated baked milk products initially were able to eventually tolerate unheated whole milk without difficulty. Only 9% of those who did not tolerate baked milk outgrew their allergy during this time.

The investigators concluded that, if a child tolerates food containing baked milk, they should continue to eat food with milk baked into it. They emphasized that feeding baked milk products to this group probably helps them develop tolerance or outgrow their milk allergy more rapidly.

Source: Kim, J.S. et al. Dietary baked milk accelerates the resolution of cow's milk allergy in children, *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*, 128:125, 2011.

Is Acetaminophen a Bad Choice for Children with Asthma?



A number of studies have suggested that the use of acetaminophen in children may increase the likelihood of developing asthma or increase the severity of asthma. This is based on associations between increased asthma prevalence in children and the increased use of acetaminophen (a common brand is Tylenol®), among several other

factors. If your child has asthma, or there is a family history that may increase your child's risk for asthma, speak to your pediatrician about using an alternative, such as ibuprofen.

Source: McBride, J.T., The Association of Acetaminophen and Asthma Prevalence and Severity, *Pediatrics*, 2011; 128: (published online ahead of print).

(Research Update continued on page 2)

Is Your Teen-ager's Perception of Asthma Control Accurate?

Previous research has demonstrated that adults often feel their asthma is better controlled than objective measures would confirm. A new study evaluated how accurately adolescents perceive their asthma control.

The study included approximately 200 patients with asthma from 12 to 22 years of age followed at an urban primary care teen clinic. Participants were asked to rate their asthma control over the previous month using a standard brief series of questions known as the Asthma Control Test.* Their responses were compared with actual measures of asthma impairment, including the frequency of inhaler use, activity level, and nocturnal and daytime symptoms.



Nearly 60% of those who felt their asthma was “well controlled” were found to have asthma that actually was *not* well controlled or was very poorly controlled. In fact, only 8% of those who perceived their asthma as well controlled met the criteria for adequate control of symptoms.

The researchers felt that many adolescents simply accepted lower levels of control, feeling that improved control was not possible. Of concern in this population was the significant limitation in tolerance of vigorous activity.

The investigators suggested that better education, counseling

about asthma control, and use of maintenance controller medication would significantly improve the quality of life in adolescents with asthma.

Source:

Britto, M.T., et al. Overestimation of Impairment -Related Asthma Control by Adolescents. *J. Pediatrics* 158: 1028. 2011.

*** You can take the *Asthma Control Test* at www.asthmacontroltest.com.**

Contact AAFA New England for a free copy of ***Get AHEAD of Asthma***, a guide to help you discuss the results with your physician.

Learning More about Eosinophilic Esophagitis

Eosinophilic esophagitis (EoE) is a chronic condition that has dramatically increased in both recognition and frequency over the past decade. Food allergies are known to trigger EoE symptoms, which are mostly gastrointestinal. They range from poor weight gain and vomiting in young children to problems swallowing and heartburn in adults.

Recent guidelines have provided an aid to physicians for the diagnosis and treatment of EoE.

These guidelines include clinical symptoms, endoscopic and biopsy findings, and treatment suggestions, including food avoidance and medications.

Until recently, however, little has been known about the “natural

history” of eosinophilic esophagitis: how does the disease progress in those who are diagnosed in childhood? A detailed follow-up study of 3,877 patients evaluated for esophagitis from 1982 through 1999 at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital provides some insight into this question.

Of the population studied, 198 were identified with eosinophilic esophagitis on the basis of biopsy and history. Fifteen years after their evaluation, 42 completed a full questionnaire.

Even after this prolonged interval, the quality of life was considerably lower in patients with EoE rather than those with simple reflux esophagitis. Nearly half continued to have dysphagia (difficulty swallowing); periodic solid-food impaction in the esophagus occurred in 40%.



The risk factors for more prolonged symptoms were higher eosinophil counts on esophageal biopsies and evidence of food allergy. These episodes occurred even when people avoided the food allergens that had been identified during their assessment.

Sources:

Liacouras, C.A. et al. Eosinophilic esophagitis: Updated consensus recommendations for children and adults. *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*, 128:3, 2011.

DeBrosse, C.W. et al. Long-term outcomes in pediatric-onset esophageal eosinophilia. *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*, 128:132, 2011.

Frank J. Twarog, M.D., Ph.D., is an allergist in Brookline and Concord, MA, and serves as President of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, New England Chapter. He is a Clinical Professor at Harvard Medical School.

AAFA New England Dr. Paul J. Hannaway Golf Classic

AAFA New England had the honor of being the first charity tournament to use the magnificent new clubhouse at the Tedesco Country Club in Marblehead, MA for our annual golf tournament on July 18. Intrepid golfers registered while a thunderstorm was raging, confident that by the time they finished lunch the weather would clear. And it did!

The tournament honors the memory of Dr. Paul J. Hannaway, who founded the tournament to benefit AAFA New England. His sons, Kevin and Tod Hannaway, are co-chairs, and daughters Holly Hannaway, Kim Schillinger and Karen Fobert (*photo at right*) also participate in continuing the Hannaway family's commitment to supporting AAFA New England.



AAFA NE President Dr. Frank Twarog (left), Grand Sponsor George Behrakis (right) and others enjoyed relaxing on the patio at the end of a wonderful day.



Kim Schillinger and Tod Hannaway were the auctioneers for a fabulous selection of items, including Red Sox tickets and restaurant certificates.

Grand Sponsor George D. Behrakis The Behrakis Foundation



Silver Tee Sponsors

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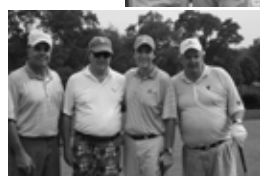
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Kenneth "Chris" Himmel
Nathaniel's at the Hawthorne Hotel
Three Cod Tavern
Barbara and Van Zissi



AAFA New England Board members Dr. John Saryan (left) and Paul Antico (above) golfed with friends and colleagues.



Photos by Mark Uzzell

Special thanks to volunteers Holly Hannaway, Kim Schillinger, Bob Stoker, and Mark Uzzell.

Thanks to everyone for supporting AAFA New England!

SHARE YOUR STORY

If I Knew THEN What I Know NOW: Adapting to Life with Food Allergies

By Debra DeBotton

When my baby's eyes suddenly swelled after eating sesame I was introduced to the world of food allergies and my life changed forever. Years later my second child was diagnosed with multiple food allergies, and I realized how challenging life can be. I had to develop new routines and plan ahead, educate others, overcome obstacles, find support, and become a strong advocate.

My children are now grown. Here are some things that I have learned about adapting to life with food allergies.

Learn about food allergies and find support: First, it is essential to see an allergist to diagnose the food allergies and teach you how to manage them. Next, find people to talk to and learn from. AAFA New England educational support groups are an invaluable resource to learn from experts and get support from other parents. Finally, find an experienced parent to guide you through day-to-day situations. It sometimes felt overwhelming but I realized that the more information and support I had the easier it got.



Create a healthy diet for your child with food allergies: Finding food that is not only nutritious but also tasty and fun is important for all parents of young children. You may need to adjust recipes to meet individual allergy needs. When I couldn't find wheat-free and gluten-free recipes I learned how to make substitutions and use special ingredients to create them myself. There are now many allergy cookbooks that can help with this. With a little creativity allergen-free meals can be nutritious, tasty and fun.

Develop routines and plan ahead: Living with food allergies means always planning ahead. Be prepared with medication and a plan for every situation that involves food. I found ways to keep my children safe and included at play dates, day care, schools, camps, holiday celebrations, visiting relatives, restaurants, traveling, vacations and more. This may seem like a lot of work, but it will become part of your routine.

Managing food around young children with allergies is possible. (It can be challenging, but it does get easier!) When children are young there is often much concern about messy hands and children being

accidentally exposed to allergenic foods. Specific plans for how food is handled around children are important until they and their friends are old enough to be cleaner and more responsible. Having children wipe hands after eating and sit only at tables and not on the floor reduces the chance of being exposed to food other children are eating. Each family needs to make decisions about how food is handled in their homes to meet their individual family and child's needs. This will change as children get older.

Plan for child care and school: Create a plan that takes into account every part of your child's day: snack, lunch, field trips and more. Meet with the teachers, school nurse and principal each spring to discuss your child's allergy needs and develop a plan for the coming year. This requires good communication, advance planning and creativity. The plan will change as your child matures and becomes more responsible.

Advocate so children are both safe and included: You are your child's most important advocate. Educate people about ways that children can be both safe and not feel left out. For example, by offering everyone at a party dairy free ice pops in addition to ice cream, the child with allergies has a safe snack and also isn't the only one eating something different. Let others know that a simple act can make a big difference in making a child feel part of the group.

(continued on next page)

As we were for Debra's family, AAFA New England is here to help your family live with food allergies.

Please share YOUR story. How have you handled "real-life" challenges of living with allergies or asthma? Let us know what happened and how everything worked out. (Send to: sharons@aafane.org, or call 781-444-7778.)

AAFA New England

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

provide you with opportunities to

- Learn from experts • Get your questions answered
- Meet others who share your concerns • Find resources and confidence

FOR MEETING DATES AND TOPICS:
see our website (www.asthmaandallergies.org) or call 781-444-7778.

MERRIMACK VALLEY ASTHMA & ALLERGY SUPPORT GROUP

North Andover, MA

Meets at Atkinson Elementary School,
111 Phillips Brooks Rd.

METRO-BOSTON ALLERGY & ASTHMA SUPPORT GROUP

Newton, MA

Meets at Newton-Wellesley Hospital,
2014 Washington St. (Rt. 16)

NASHOBA VALLEY ASTHMA & ALLERGY EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT GROUP

Ayer, MA

Meets at Nashoba Valley Medical
Center, 200 Groton Road

NORTHWEST SUBURBAN BOSTON AREA SUPPORT GROUP

Lexington, MA

Meets at Beth Israel and Children's
Hospital Medical Care Center,
482 Bedford St.

SOUTHEASTERN MASS. FOOD ALLERGY PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Foxboro, MA

Meets at Pediatric Specialists, 132
Central St., Suite 116, (Exit 7B off Rt.
95 -Route 140 North)

FOOD ALLERGY GROUP OF THE NORTH SHORE

Salem, MA

Meets at Salem Hospital, 81 Highland
Ave. (Davenport Conference Area -
First floor)

METRO-WEST ALLERGY & ASTHMA SUPPORT GROUP

Framingham, MA

Meets at Allergy & Asthma Treatment
Specialists, 475 Franklin St., Suite 206

PIONEER VALLEY FOOD ALLERGY SUPPORT

Ludlow, MA

Meets at St. John the Baptist Pastoral
Center, 201 Hubbard St.

SHORESIDE ASTHMA & ALLERGY EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT GROUP

Kingston, MA

Meets at Wingate - The Inn at Silver
Lake, 21 Chipman Way

CAPE COD ASTHMA & ALLERGY GROUP

Yarmouth Port, MA

Meets at Allergy & Asthma Center for
Cape Cod, 244 Willow St.

RHODE ISLAND ALLERGY & ASTHMA EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT GROUP

Providence, RI

Meets at Asthma & Allergy Physicians
of Rhode Island, 1056 Hope St.

*Send your e-mail address if you
would like to receive announcements
about support group programs.
Let us know which group is closest
to you. Send to: aafane@aafane.org*

SHARE YOUR STORY (continued from page 2)

Show your appreciation to those who help: It is so important to thank the people who go out of their way to help. They are role models for others, make the child with allergies feel like part of the group, and make your job of managing food allergies easier.

You can make a difference! As result of education and advocacy by parents there have been many positive changes for children with food allergies. When my children entered school, the

school system had never dealt with accommodating food allergies and I needed to educate teachers, parents and students in every grade. Over the years, many states have adopted guidelines to manage food allergies in schools. Accommodations are made in classrooms and cafeterias. Now some schools avoid food for celebrations and learning activities and even have allergy awareness programs for elementary students.

I believe that the more we share our stories and advocate for our children, the easier it will be in the future for people with food allergies.

Debra DeBotton was one of the first in her community to advocate for allergy-friendly school policies, and continues to work to improve allergy awareness and management.

Dear Friends,

So far this fall has been typical of New England's wacky weather – warm one day, rainy and cold the next. This can be especially challenging if you have asthma or seasonal allergies.

Make sure you have a current Asthma Action Plan to help you manage your asthma and stay healthy. Please contact our office for the latest information and an Asthma/Allergy Action Plan form. An Action plan is one of the best tools you have to manage your or your child's asthma and allergies in school, at home and at work.

This issue also includes photographs from our 2011 AAFA New England Dr. Paul J. Hannaway Memorial Golf Classic, one of New England's premier charity events. If you weren't at the tournament this summer, you missed a great day. We hope that you will join us next year.

We are here to serve our members. Please call us if you need our help. If you aren't already a member, or you need to renew, it's easy to join. Just send in the form found in this issue or call us at 781-444-7778.

Be well,

Elaine Erenrich Rosenberg
Executive Director

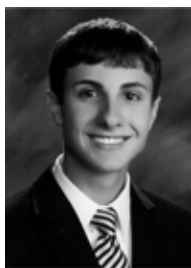


**Flu shot reminder:
Get everyone in your family
protected now!**

GROWING UP with Asthma or Severe Allergies

How do teens from around New England handle social and school situations involving their asthma and allergies? How do they advocate for themselves, maintain sound treatment plans, or deal with social pressures? Many high school seniors responded to these questions as part of AAFA New England's annual scholarship competition.

Alexander Cave of Glastonbury, Connecticut was awarded a \$250 scholarship, and fifteen outstanding students were awarded Honorable Mention. These inspiring teens were selected based on their excellent



Alexander Cave
Asthma or Severe Allergies as a Teen."

Alex began his winning essay by describing his and his mother's emotions the day he was headed to kindergarten for the first time. "My parents spent countless hours preparing me for this day," he said. This included adding an epinephrine injection trainer to his toy doctor's kit and memorizing the symbols on an ingredient vocabulary chart.

"My experiences with food allergies have taught me a great deal about communication," he said. He used those skills starting in first grade, bravely asking his brand new friends to please not eat peanut butter around him. In later years he was able to communicate his food allergy needs to the staff at sleep-away camp and at restaurants.

Helping others is important to Alex. He reflected thoughtfully

on his work with Best Buddies, an organization that provides one-to-one friendships for kids with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and the opportunity he had to speak reassuringly to help the mother of a young boy recently diagnosed with peanut allergy.

"The everyday challenge of dealing with food allergies has had a positive effect on shaping me as a person," he said. "By educating myself and not being afraid to take charge I not only felt better about my food allergies but also about myself."

Alex was inducted into both the National and Science Honor Societies, and has won numerous awards for academic excellence. He was the editor of his high school newspaper, and performed in the school jazz band. He played in town basketball and baseball leagues, and served as a Little League umpire.

Winners were selected by a group of dedicated volunteers who carefully read and evaluated the applications. Thanks to Scholarship Committee members Laifong Lee, Janet Lilienthal, Betsy Luchars, Judi McAuliffe and Anita Redner.

Congratulations to the following students who were awarded HONORABLE MENTION

Kyle T. Armstrong, West Kingston, RI
Hillary May Brintle, Yarmouth, ME
Allison Coll, East Hampton, CT
Jennifer DeRico, Griswold, CT
Jessica DiPhilippo, Falmouth, ME
Melissa Ann Fenderson, Falmouth, ME
Alyssa Heisler, Burlington, MA
John Kou, Andover, MA
Katie Murphy, South Portland, ME
Jeffrey M. O'Brien, Naugatuck, CT
Katherine Qualey, Norridgewock, ME
Alyssa Solomon, Andover, MA
Brandon Strong, Durham, NH
Benjamin K. Ward, Houlton, ME
Courtney Williams, Vassalboro, ME

Community Donors: Tag Sale and Triathlon Raise Awareness about Asthma

Eleven-year-old **Abigail Rickevicius of Oakville, CT** raised a lot of awareness about asthma at a townwide tag sale this fall. In addition to selling brownies and bottled water she collected almost \$200 in donations to AAFA New England to support asthma education.



Abigail Rickevicius

"I have decided to work with AAFA New England," she said, "because I have asthma and so does my little brother and most of my family. It is something that affects me every day, but with the help of organizations like AAFA information is available to help me and others continue with their everyday life. I love to dance and sing, and with the knowledge and medicine available to me anything is possible." Abigail participates in pageants and is the current "Junior Miss Naugatuck Valley."



Jessica and Richard Barbera

The Barbera family of Marlborough, MA is also affected by asthma. **Richard Barbera and his daughter Jessica** raised almost \$2,000 in donations in support of their participation in the Marlboro Triathlon. They completed the race in 2 hrs and 15 minutes (1/3 mile swim, 15 mile bike and 5K run). Wow! A great workout that took lots of training, and proves that people with asthma can be accomplished athletes.

Thank you to these dedicated supporters and their generous friends and relatives. Would your family like to organize a community fundraiser to raise awareness as well as raise funds for AAFA New England? Let us know how we can help and send us a photo for our next newsletter!

BECOME A MEMBER OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW!

Membership in AAFA New England helps you and others with asthma and allergies to enjoy fuller lives.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$50 |
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MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES

- ◆ Newsletters mailed to you (Multiple copies to Professional members)
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Send your check payable to AAFA New England to 109 Highland Ave., Needham, MA 02494. MC/VISA accepted by phone or on-line at www.asthmaandallergies.org.

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Please remember to ask your company for a matching contribution to AAFA NE.

ASTHMA & ALLERGY BULLETIN

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The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, New England Chapter, is dedicated to helping people with asthma and allergic diseases, and those who care for them, through education, support for research and an array of services.

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Honor your friends and relatives by making a donation to AAFA New England

**Donations have recently been
received in memory of:**

Martha Edwards

Matthew Ryan

**Donations can also be made in honor of
family, friends, or healthcare providers,
or to mark special occasions.**

To contribute a memorial gift or tribute in honor of a special person or a birthday or other event, please send a check payable to AAFA New England. MC/VISA accepted by phone, mail or on-line: www.asthmaandallergies.org. Please include the name of the person being honored or memorialized, and let us know who to notify of your donation.



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To receive future issues at home, become a member of AAFA New England. (See page 7)*



Asthma and Allergy
Foundation of America

November 17, 2011

Frank J. Twarog, MD, PhD
Chair, Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, New England Chapter
109 Highland Avenue
Needham, MA 02494

Subject: 2011 State Honor Roll of Asthma and Allergy School Policies

Dear Dr. Twarog:

Earlier this month, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America released the *2011 State Honor Roll of Asthma and Allergy School Policies*. We developed this project to in part encourage state leaders to improve practices that support asthma and allergy health for pupils by pointing to positive state-wide policies.

We select the states that best meet the standards we recognize, and name them to our State Honor Roll. One of the obvious findings of this report since its inception in 2008 has been the strength of these policies in the New England states. Four have been on the Honor Roll all four years, and all rise to the top in the categories we assess: medication and treatment, awareness and school environment.

This year, we acknowledge what has been clear since 2008: New England is the model for statewide school policies that promote and protect school students with asthma and allergies. We salute your successful efforts over the years, especially your work with schools. AAFA New England's ongoing commitment to lead the way is unsurpassed!

Sincerely,

Bill McLin
President and CEO
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

New England Dominates School Honor Roll

We're proud to say that four New England states were among the six that made the national Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) State Honor Roll again this year for having supportive policies for students with asthma and allergies, including food allergies.

Congratulations to the many people in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, and AAFA New England, who have worked hard to put our states at the forefront of asthma and allergy school advocacy.

This is the fourth year that AAFA has published a report on state-level progress towards better school-based policies, which is design to provide a blueprint for asthma and allergy advocates nationwide. For more information see www.StateHonorRoll.org.

