

# Asthma & Allergy Bulletin

ASTHMA AND ALLERGY FOUNDATION OF AMERICA • NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER



## Food Allergies and the Law in the Workplace

By Laurel Francoeur, Esq.

Many people who were diagnosed with food allergies as children are now entering the workforce. It is crucial for employers to acknowledge and accommodate the needs of employees with food allergies. Luckily, federal law offers employees protection in the workplace.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires employers with 15 or more employees to provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, including those with severe or life-threatening food allergies. Another federal law, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, also mandates that employers who receive federal funds must provide reasonable accommodations for employees with food allergies, regardless of the organization's size. Accommodations are changes to policies and procedures that would allow a food allergic individual to have safe and equal access in the workplace.



Employers may not ask potential hires about their food allergies, and applicants should not disclose their allergies during an interview. Once hired, however, employees are responsible for informing their employer about their allergies if they want to request accommodations.

Employers must engage in an interactive process with employees to identify and provide appropriate accommodations. Employees should meet with the human resources department to explain how their allergies affect them and what can be done to minimize risk.

*Continued on page 4*

**May 6**  
28 million people in the US have asthma - although it can't be cured, it can be managed!

**Food Allergy Awareness Week**  
May 11 - May 17



AAFA New England is lighting up Boston's Prudential Center in teal on Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup>

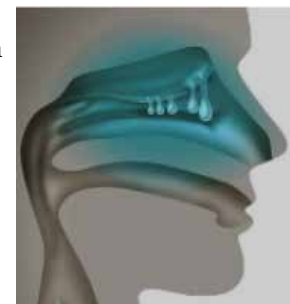


Celebrate the final day of Asthma & Allergy Awareness Month with us!  
See page 2 for details!

## Nasal Polyps – Symptoms and Treatment

By Kathleen M. Buchheit, MD and Tiffany Dharia, MD

Nasal polyps are benign (non-cancerous), inflammatory growths that occur in the lining of the sinuses. Nasal polyps can grow into the nasal cavity over time and cause nasal blockage, problems with sense of smell, and discomfort. If large enough, they can sometimes be visible to the eye as soft, grape-like sacs hanging in the nose, but more commonly can be seen by your doctor on nasal endoscopy (where your doctor uses an instrument or camera to look further up your nose). Nasal polyps can also be diagnosed on special imaging, such as a CT scan, of the sinuses.



Although nasal polyps are benign, they are often associated with asthma, chronic rhinosinusitis and aspirin-exacerbated respiratory disease (AERD) and arise from long term inflammation in the nasal passages. Common symptoms experienced due to nasal polyps include runny or congested nose, post-nasal drip, decreased sense of smell, facial and sinus pain or pressure, headaches, and snoring. Nasal polyposis can have a significant impact on quality of life, due to difficulty with sleep and insomnia, nasal obstruction and congestion making it difficult to breathe, and loss of smell and/or taste. If you have environmental allergies, evaluation by an allergist may be helpful to help understand your allergic triggers and discuss measures to limit and manage allergic exposures, but treating underlying allergies is often not sufficient to control symptoms from nasal polyps. Limiting exposure to chemical irritants and air pollutants may also be helpful.

There are many ways to treat nasal polyposis which can be discussed with your physician. The first line of treatment includes intranasal corticosteroid sprays, many of which are available over-the counter or by prescription. Saline rinses are also often recommended.

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(1929-2015)

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DETAILS/TICKETS



**JOIN US!**

May 31, 12:30pm - 5:30pm

**LOCATION**

Sheraton Boston Needham Hotel,  
100 Cabot Street, Needham, MA

**INFO/QUESTIONS**

[asthmaandallergies.org](http://asthmaandallergies.org)  
[events@aafane.org](mailto:events@aafane.org)

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Parents/Caregivers
- Patients
- Food Allergy Advocates
- School Nurses and Teachers
- You!

### TOPICS AND SPEAKERS

*Updated Recommendations for Food Allergy Management at School, K-12*

Michael Pistiner, MD, MMSc  
Christine Creter

*Anxiety and Food Allergies: Strategies for Patient and Caregiver Wellbeing Through the Ages*

Lisa Bartnikas, MD  
Sara Voorhees, PhD  
Emilé Baker, LICSW

*What's New in Food Allergy Treatments*

Sarita Patil, MD

*Traveling with Food Allergies: A Guide to Safe and Confident Adventures*

Kyle Dine  
Allie Bahn

**BREAKOUT: CHAT & CONNECT!**

**EXPO: FOOD-ALLERGY FRIENDLY COMPANIES!**

**BOOK CORNER!**



## ASICS Falmouth Road Race 2025: Introducing Team AAFANE!



For the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, AAFA New England has been selected as a Numbers for Nonprofits charity partner in the ASICS Falmouth Road Race! Team AAFANE runners raise awareness and funds for AAFA New England - supporting our mission and our work.

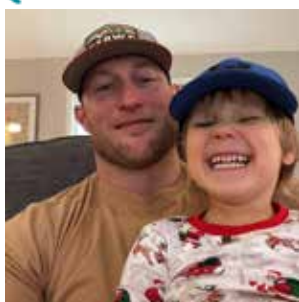
Each of our runners has a personal reason why they've chosen to run for Team AAFANE. During the weeks leading up to the Race, we'll be sharing their stories on social media - so be sure to follow us!

Our runners support us, so please support them. Wear your teal and cheer them on from the sidelines in Falmouth on August 17.

**Contribute by visiting [falmouthroadrace.com](https://falmouthroadrace.com) (click donate to a charity team & search for AAFA New England)**

**Thank you to our runners and to all who support them.**

**Every contribution counts!**



Eric Worcester



Nicole Arpiarian



Zach Yusuff



Megan Shai Brown



Meghan Neri, Team Captain



Marnely Murray



Casey O'Connor



Alissa Robinson and Larry Amara



Ilya Podolyako



Olivia and Brian Wolfe



Max Reinhardt

Not Pictured: Katie and Bianca Sousa



Kelly Dunham

## Food Allergies and the Law in the Workplace *(continued from page 1)*

Employees may need to provide medical documentation of the allergy. Some possible accommodations might include providing a safe and separate space to store food, such as a dedicated fridge, shelf or cabinet, designating allergen-free zones, allowing remote work, or making necessary adjustments to company events and meetings involving food. After the meeting, the employee should send a follow-up email summarizing what was discussed and any agreements made to ensure clarity and compliance. If an employer denies a specific accommodation, the law requires the employer to put the reason for the denial in writing.

Federal law also protects employees from retaliation for requesting accommodations or reporting discrimination. Employers cannot take adverse actions against employees for asserting their rights. For example, employees with food allergies should not face penalties for missing work due to their allergies.

Additionally, employees should not be disciplined for opting out of work-related events that involve food.

If you think you have suffered discrimination at work because of your food allergy or if your employer refuses to provide accommodations, you can file a complaint with the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) or the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination.

Employers must recognize and accommodate the unique needs of employees with food allergies. By working together, employers can empower their employees with food allergies to work confidently and comfortably.



Laurel Francoeur is a Woburn-based attorney specializing in assisting clients with food allergies. As an author and national speaker, she addresses how food allergies relate to the law. With a 25-year-old son who has severe food allergies, her commitment to this cause is both professional and personal. She has also previously been involved with AAFANE, serving as a board member and support group leader.

## Nasal Polyps – Symptoms and Treatment *(continued from page 1)*

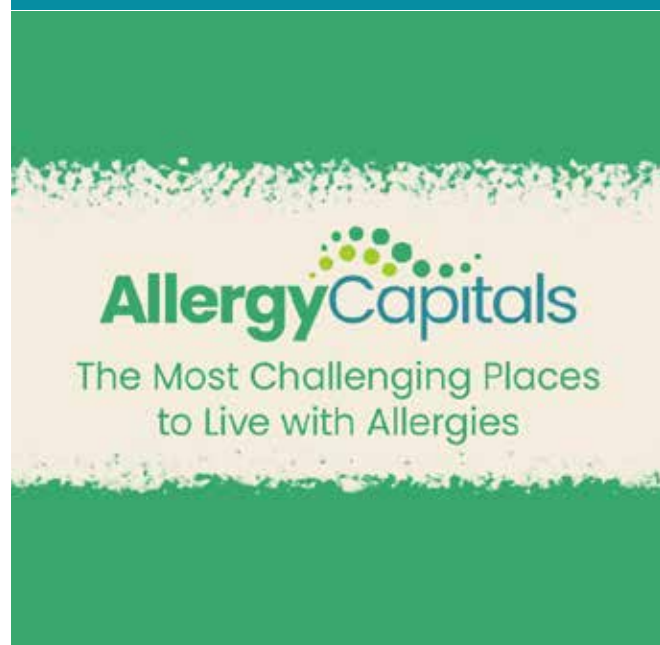
For those who have severe nasal polyps, sinus surgery is also an option and can be considered with consultation with an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) doctor, also known as an otolaryngologist. Following sinus surgery, ongoing maintenance care for your sinuses will continue to be important, including nasal rinses and sprays, allergen avoidance, reducing irritant exposure and treating any underlying contributory conditions. There are also biologic medications approved for treatment of nasal polyps, which are usually used for patients with severe disease who don't respond to first line treatments. These are prescribed injectable medications that can be self-administered under the skin that target specific immune pathways and can reduce the size and symptoms of nasal polyps, leading to significant improvement in nasal congestion, sense of smell, and sleep. Living with nasal polyps can be difficult, and although many patients learn to live with their symptoms, there are several treatments available to help you find relief and breathe, sleep and smell better.



Dr. Katie Buchheit is an Allergy/Immunology specialist at Brigham and Women's Hospital. She does clinical and translational research focused on the pathogenesis of nasal polyposis and aspirin-exacerbated respiratory disease (AERD). She is dedicated to investigating the causative mechanisms and exploring new treatments for chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps. Clinically, she focuses her practice primarily on the treatment of patients with chronic rhinosinusitis and AERD.

Dr. Tiffany Dharja is a second year Allergy and Immunology Fellow in Training at Brigham and Women's Hospital. She is working on a research project with Dr. Buchheit to investigate causative mechanisms in the pathogenesis of nasal polyps.

## Allergy Capitals 2025



The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America's (AAFA) **2025 Allergy Capitals™** report ranks the 100 most populous cities in the United States by how challenging they are to live in with pollen allergies.

More than 100 million people in the United States live with various types of allergies every year - many have seasonal pollen allergies. For those with seasonal allergies, climate change fuels a perfect storm of conditions that make allergy symptoms worse. The Allergy Capitals™ report provides helpful information that can improve the quality of life for people living with seasonal allergies.

Be sure to see your health care provider if you have difficulty controlling symptoms.

### ***How do New England Cities Rank?***

#42	New Haven, CT
#73	Worcester, MA
#76	Hartford, CT
#78	Providence, RI
#81	Bridgeport, CT
#100	Boston, MA



# AAFA New England: News & Notes

## Webinars Coming Soon!



**LUMA - Learn to Understand and Manage Severe Asthma**

**Date:** May 6

**Time:** 7pm-9pm

Asthma affects nearly 25 million people in the United States. Join us to **learn** that asthma is a chronic disease of airway inflammation; **Understand** that the immune system is an underlying cause of asthma; and **Manage** the role you play in your asthma care. For details and to register, visit [asthmaandallergies.org](http://asthmaandallergies.org).

Thank you to Amgen for their support of this webinar.

**Webinar Coming in June: "A Team Approach to FPIES Management and Support"**

**Date:** June TBD

**Time:** 7pm-9pm

Please join us for a virtual multidisciplinary group-based program to enhance education and support for caregivers of children with FPIES. Food protein-induced enterocolitis syndrome (FPIES) is a non-IgE-mediated food allergy that presents as delayed vomiting after culprit food ingestion, sometimes followed by diarrhea, in some cases progressing to shock. This program is designed to complement routine FPIES care provided by the child's health care providers.



Speakers: Lisa Bartnikas, MD; Elena Crestani, MD, MS; Wendy Elverson, RD, CSP, LDN; Jennifer LeBovidge, PhD; Erin Syverson, MD

For details & to register, please visit [www.asthmaandallergies.org](http://www.asthmaandallergies.org)  
All Speaker Series webinars are recorded and can be found at [www.asthmaandallergies.org](http://www.asthmaandallergies.org)

## Legislative Advocacy

\* **Maine LD 1053** – Share the Savings Bill – AAFA New England provided written testimony in support to members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services hearing.

\* **Rhode Island H 5464** – AAFA New England signed onto a letter to RI House Finance Committee in support of bill that will make casinos smokefree.

\* **Rhode Island H 5597** – AAFA New England signed onto a letter to Members of the House Education Committee in support of H 5597 pertaining to ensuring indoor air quality in schools

\* **Massachusetts:** AAFA New England is beginning its advocacy work and support of **H.2500** An Act relative to increasing access to epinephrine; **H.1962** An Act relative to police use of epinephrine autoinjectors; and **H.611** An Act relative to emergency stock epinephrine in schools.

Join our email list ([asthmaandallergies.org](http://asthmaandallergies.org)) to receive notifications about the bills AAFA New England is working on. We will share updates via email and social media regarding specific ways you can get involved. Every voice matters!



## Honoring Three Champions of the Asthma & Allergy Community

2025 Fall Gala  
and Exhibit

for life  
without limits™

October 24

Join Us!

Friday, October 24  
6:00pm - 10:00pm  
UMass Club  
One Beacon Street



**QIAN YUAN, MD, PhD**

Clinical Director and Principal Investigator, The Food Allergy Center, Massachusetts General Hospital  
Associate Professor in Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School  
Senior Pediatrician, Pediatric Gastroenterology & Nutrition  
Massachusetts General Hospital  
Dr. Yuan will be honored for his passion and commitment to his pediatric patients and his groundbreaking clinical work on the gut's role in food allergies and intolerances, EoE and eosinophilic gastrointestinal disorders.



**JANET WEINSTEIN, MSN, RN**

School Nurse, Country School, Weston, MA

Ms. Weinstein will be honored for her unwavering care and exemplary work to create safe and inclusive environments for her students with food allergies that address both the physical and social-emotional needs of these students.



**Homefree LLC**

Jill Robbins, Founder and President

Homefree, LLC will be honored for its intensive allergen-safe standards in manufacturing a full variety of flavored cookies all made in a dedicated baking facility free of the top nine allergens, plus five more, that is gluten-free, Non-GMO verified, and vegan.



We look forward to celebrating with you on Friday, October 24 for a memorable evening. Enjoy a delicious dinner, connect with the AAFA New England community and take-in the spectacular view!

Tickets and exhibiting information are available at [asthmaandallergies.org](http://asthmaandallergies.org).

# Research Clinical Studies: Opportunities to Get Involved



**Boston Children's Hospital**  
Until every child is well™

- **IDEA** (Investigating Dupliumab's Effect on Asthma by genotype) We are studying if people have a certain genetic make-up (genotype) will respond better to dupliumab. Adolescents and Adults age 12 and above with asthma are eligible. <https://answers.childrenshospital.org/dupliumab-asthma/> <https://ideaasthma.org>
- **CHEETAH** (Mechanisms Underlying Asthma Symptoms and Exacerbations Across T2 status in children. We are studying if there are different mechanisms in asthma symptoms during asthma exacerbations. Children age 6-17 with asthma are eligible.
- **ADRN** (Atopic Dermatitis Research Network) We are investigating mechanisms of atopic dermatitis in any age 2 and above. This study wants to understand how the severity of atopic dermatitis or eczema is influenced by genetic factors.
- **LEADS** Longitudinal Endotyping of Atopic Dermatitis through Transcriptomic Skin Analysis (Atopic Dermatitis Research Network) We are aiming to learn certain characteristics of the skin and how those characteristics are related to the severity of Atopic Dermatitis and the skin's response to different treatments. Anyone age 6 and above are eligible, including adults. We are also recruiting healthy controls.
- **EAGLE** (A Randomized, Placebo-Controlled, Double-Blind, Multicenter, Phase 2 Study to Assess the Efficacy and Safety of Daily OM-85 Treatment vs. Placebo given in Children Aged 6 Months to 5 Years with Recurrent Wheezing) We are studying whether babies with wheezing will benefit from an oral treatment that modifies the gut microbiome.
- **SICAS-3** (School Inner-City Asthma Study) We are evaluating whether children and adults with or without asthma have novel signatures in asthma control. Children and adults 5 and above including healthy controls are eligible.

**Boston Children's Hospital studies provide free treatments, \$\$ compensation for time and travel. For more information about any of the above BCH studies and/or to refer potential interested families, please email: [asthma@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:asthma@childrens.harvard.edu) OR call 857- 218-5336 OR see website <https://bchasthmaresearch.com>**

Scan to participate



Scan QR code to learn more



**Massachusetts General Hospital**

**Contact: Jannat Gill, Clinical Research Manager at [Jgill0@mgh.harvard.edu](mailto:Jgill0@mgh.harvard.edu) to learn more.**

**PROTECT** (A Phase I clinical trial to evaluate the safety and tolerability of VLP Peanut in healthy subjects and subjects with peanut allergy to explore preliminary signals of its efficacy) We are studying the safety and tolerability of VLP Peanut, a therapeutic vaccine, which has been designed to help treat peanut allergy. Healthy adults ages 18-50 weighing over 70kg are eligible for Part A1. Peanut allergic adults ages 18- 50 years old are eligible for Part B. The study site is MGH, Boston.

**ALK** (A phase I open-label trial to assess the tolerability and safety of an up-dosing regimen with a once- daily peanut SLIT-tablet in adults, adolescents, and children with peanut allergy) We are researching the safety and efficacy of a once-daily peanut sublingual immunotherapy tablet (SLIT) that might help lessen allergic reactions to peanut. Peanut allergic individuals ages 12-65 years are eligible. The study site is MGH, Boston.

**OWED** (Omalizumab Weight-based Dosing Efficacy) We are researching the efficacy of weight-based omalizumab dosing for food allergy especially for those that have high total IgE that fall outside the current dosing recommendations. Food allergic individuals ages 1-55 years are eligible. The study site is MGH, Boston. This study will start enrollment in May.



**Boston Children's Hospital**  
Until every child is well™

## **FPIES Registry**

Longitudinal Registry of Patients with Food Protein-Induced Enterocolitis Syndrome

*Funded with the support of the International FPIES Association.*

**What is the purpose of the study?** Researchers at Boston Children's Hospital are developing a registry for patients with FPIES, with the goal of advancing knowledge and developing treatments for this condition.

**Who can participate?** Children and adults who have been diagnosed with FPIES can participate in this registry.

**What do I have to do if I'm in the study?** If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to complete periodic online surveys, which will take about 20 minutes to complete. You will also have the opportunity to periodically provide biospecimens, including blood and stool samples.

**What are the benefits of the study?** There is no financial cost. There is no direct benefit of participating. Your participation may benefit society by helping us learn more about FPIES and possible treatments.

Scan QR code to learn more



For more information about this study and to access the survey: Adult FPIES Registry (age ≥18 years): <https://redcap.link/FPIESadult>

Pediatric FPIES Registry (age <18 years): Will be available soon  
Please share this information with other families!

If you have questions or would like additional information about this study, please email us at: [FPIES@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:FPIES@childrens.harvard.edu)



**Thank You To Our Corporate Partners!  
Your Support Makes Our Work Possible**

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### Published with a grant from the Thoracic Foundation

#### Asthma & Allergy Bulletin

Published three times a year by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America - New England Chapter;  
781-444-7778; Email: [aafane@aafane.org](mailto:aafane@aafane.org)

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.

Information contained in this newsletter should not be used as a substitute for responsible professional care to diagnose and treat specific symptoms and illness. Any reference to available products and procedures should not be construed as an endorsement. AAFA New England, including all parties to, or associated with this newsletter, will not be held responsible for any action taken by readers as a result of the newsletter.

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- Make a one-time, tax-deductible contribution \*
  - Set up a recurring monthly donation\*
  - Make a Qualified Charitable Donation (QCD) from your IRA
  - Recommend a grant from your Donor Advised Fund (DAF)
  - Increase your contribution if your employer has a matching gift program
  - Celebrate someone with a tribute
  - Attend our Food Allergy Conference & Expo
  - Join us at our 2025 Fall Gala and Exhibit
  - Support a Team AFFANE runner in the Falmouth Road Race
  - Contribute to our Medical Research Grant
  - Become a Corporate Partner, Sponsor or Exhibitor
- \*Online contributions can be made at [asthmaandallergies.org](http://asthmaandallergies.org)

Checks, made payable to AAFA New England can be mailed to:

AAFA New England  
25 Braintree Hill Office Park, Suite 200,  
Braintree, MA 02184

## New Books



#### New Book: ImmuniForce: The Anaphylaxis Strike By Thomas Silvera

The Anaphylaxis Strike is a powerful children's graphic novel that blends action, education, and advocacy. Set in the vibrant world of Allergyville, a heroic team called ImmuniForce battles the villainous Anaphylaxis and his army of allergen minions. Through this thrilling adventure, young readers learn about food allergy safety, the importance of preparedness, and how knowledge can be a superpower.



#### New Book: Millie's Adventures in Paris

By MG Prezioso

Millie the Mouse had never been on a vacation before... until now! Her whole family, including her little sister, Macie, journey all the way to the Paris, ready to climb to the top of the Eiffel Tower and see the city from up high. But when Millie sits down for lunch, she learns something she did not expect: she is allergic to milk! Will Dr. Wilde save the day? Will Millie make it to the top of the Eiffel Tower? You will have to wait and see!! To purchase the book, visit us at [wholewildeworld.com](http://wholewildeworld.com).

**Have an idea for an article for our Bulletin? Please let us know!  
Email us at [aafane@aafane.org](mailto:aafane@aafane.org) or give us a call at 781-444-7778  
Thank you!**



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**New England**

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AAFA New England

**FOOD ALLERGY  
CONFERENCE & EXPO**  
EDUCATION - AWARENESS - CONNECTION  
SATURDAY, MAY 31, 2025

Celebrate Asthma & Allergy Awareness Month with us at our  
Food Allergy Conference & Expo  
Learn from experts, Connect with others who "get it" & Strengthen our  
New England Food Allergy Community  
Get your tickets today!

**neffy**<sup>®</sup>  
(epinephrine nasal spray)

**Great News!** The Food and Drug Administration has approved **neffy**<sup>®</sup> 1mg (epinephrine nasal spray) for the treatment of Type 1 Allergic Reactions, including anaphylaxis, and children who are aged four years and older and weigh 33 to 66 lbs. This approval represents the first significant innovation in the delivery of epinephrine for this patient population in more than 35 years. **neffy**<sup>®</sup> is manufactured by ARS Pharma and is expected to be available in late May.

## Find Us On Social Media!

