

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Prevention or avoidance? Study into infant peanut allergy.**

Over the past few decades, health authorities in the UK, the US, and Canada laid out recommendations that children at high risk for peanut allergy should not eat peanut-containing foods in the first few years of life. In the US, The American Academy of Pediatrics recommended avoiding solids until six months of age, cows' milk until 1 year of age, egg to 2 years and peanuts, tree nuts and fish to 3 years of age. Recently however, these recommendations have been revised in the UK and withdrawn in the US.

More recently, scientists and clinical researchers have begun to question whether delayed introduction of allergenic foods into the infant diet is necessarily the best strategy for allergy prevention. There is now belief that regular early consumption of peanut or other foods that cause allergies from early infancy may allow the child's immune system to develop tolerance and thus prevent the child from developing allergies. Is it best to rigorously avoid peanuts and other allergenic foods during early infancy? Or should children be exposed to these foods through regular consumption?

The LEAP study (Learning Early about Peanut allergy) is trying to address specifically whether feeding peanuts to young infants at risk of developing allergy will prevent peanut allergy, or alternatively whether avoidance is the better strategy.

The EAT study (Early Acquisition of Tolerance) is a new study which is investigating whether the early introduction of 6 allergenic foods into the diet of infants from the general population, alongside continued breastfeeding, will reduce the risk of developing food allergies and related conditions in childhood.

The results of the LEAP Study are expected to be available in late 2014. The results of the EAT study will be available in 2015.

Dr Glenis Scadding, President of the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology said "These two studies are pivotal in our knowledge about the development of food allergies and possibly of how to avoid them. It appears likely that the route by which allergen is encountered may determine the outcome of the body's response- i.e. allergy or tolerance and if proven this concept could prove helpful in the future. The BSACI are hosts of this year's largest European allergy meeting ever, at London ExCel from 5th-9th June, where Professor Gideon Lack who is a principle investigator in these studies will be speaking."

[www.leapstudy.co.uk](http://www.leapstudy.co.uk)  
[www.eatstudy.co.uk](http://www.eatstudy.co.uk)

### **Notes to the Editor**

The British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology are pleased to be hosting this year's European allergy meeting in London. The European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) will be holding their annual conference at ExCel London from 5th-9th June, 2010, and this year's conference is set to be the largest allergy meeting ever to take place with around 8,000 delegates from all over Europe and the world attending. This conference will give the BSACI a platform by which to raise important issues on allergic diseases in UK which have reached epidemic proportions.

### **About The British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology**

The British Society for Allergy & Clinical Immunology (BSACI) is the national, professional and academic society which represents the specialty of allergy at all levels. Its aim is to improve the management of allergies and related diseases of the immune system in the United Kingdom, through education, training and research.

The BSACI website hosts the only comprehensive list of the NHS allergy clinics in the UK which BSACI actively encourages GP's to use when referring patients to an allergy specialist for treatment.

[www.bsaci.org](http://www.bsaci.org)

### **About EAACI**

EAACI - The European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology is a non-profit organisation active in the field of allergic and immunologic diseases such as asthma, rhinitis, eczema, occupational allergy, food and drug allergy and anaphylaxis. EAACI was founded in 1956 in Florence and has become the largest medical association in Europe in the field of allergy and clinical immunology. It includes 5'500 individual members from 107 countries, as well as 40 National Allergy Societies.

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