



European  
Centre for  
Allergy  
Research  
Foundation



FOR  
A BETTER  
LIFE WITH  
ALLERGIES

## DID YOU KNOW?

- For years, the number of allergy sufferers has been rising in industrialised countries.
- Over 30% of the population in Europe is directly affected by one or more allergies. Family members may also be affected.
- Allergies reduce the quality of life of those affected and can have life-threatening consequences. Nonetheless, their impact is often underestimated.
- Only 10% of allergy sufferers receive proper medical treatment.
- 40% of allergy sufferers with untreated hay fever develop allergic asthma over time.
- Schoolchildren with untreated hay fever demonstrate a 30% reduction in learning ability and performance in school.
- They also have a 40% risk of scoring one grade lower by the end of the school year.
- The decrease in productivity due to untreated allergies results in an avoidable annual economic loss of €100 billion in Europe.
- The reasons behind the growing number of allergy sufferers have not been thoroughly investigated. Various factors such as the Western lifestyle, with its strong focus on hygiene, as well as environmental pollution and genetic factors, contribute to the incidence of allergies.

## ECARF FOUNDATION

The non-profit European Centre for Allergy Research Foundation (ECARF) was founded in 2003. It is headquartered at Europe's biggest university clinic, Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin, and is managed by Stifterverband, the business community's innovation initiative for the German science system. ECARF is the only internationally active foundation for allergies.

### GOALS

ECARF is dedicated to making the lives of allergy sufferers easier and reducing their symptoms. The Foundation is committed to the ongoing promotion of research and increasing awareness in order to be able to provide a wide range of excellent treatment options to allergy sufferers in the future and gain sufficient knowledge on how to deal with allergies.

### ECARF AMBASSADORS

Scientific and cultural ambassadors have been appointed to achieve the goals of ECARF at the international level. The ambassadors are leading figures in their countries and work on a voluntary basis.

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Foundation is overseen by an executive board. The Chairman of the Executive Board is Professor Dr. med. Dr. h. c. Torsten Zuberbier, Managing Director of the Clinic for Dermatology, Venereology and Allergology at Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin.



Prof. Torsten Zuberbier

---

*"There is far too little allergy research being conducted," says Professor Zuberbier. "This is why, as physicians, we run up against barriers so quickly. My goal is to promote allergy research so that people with allergies can enjoy better living conditions."*

---

# PREVALENCE OF ALLERGIES IN EUROPE

Total population: 505 million [2013]



## DEFINITION

The term allergy refers to an overreaction of the immune system to a harmless substance, which results in the appearance of allergy symptoms. The most common allergens are pollen, dust mites, food, animal hair, medications, insect venom, mould, cosmetics and contact substances such as nickel.

## CAUSES

The reasons behind the growing number of allergy sufferers have not been thoroughly investigated. Various factors such as the Western lifestyle, with its strong focus on hygiene, as well as environmental pollution and genetic factors, contribute to the incidence of allergies.

Schoolchildren with untreated hay fever have a 40% risk of scoring one grade lower by the end of the school year.

[Source: Walker S et al: Seasonal allergic rhinitis is associated with a detrimental effect on examination performance in United Kingdom teenagers: Case-control study. J ALLERGY CLIN IMMUNOL 120 [2007] 381-387.]

40

30

Schoolchildren with untreated allergic rhinitis (hay fever) demonstrate a 30% reduction in learning ability and performance in school.

[Source: B. Kay, J Allergy Clin Immunol 2000]

Every year, 30.000 adolescents in Germany are forced to terminate their apprenticeships due to an allergy.

[Source: Thomas Muth et al: „Gesundheitlich begründete Ausbildungsabbrüche“]

30.000

The consequences of hay fever cause a loss of one million workdays.

1.000.000

Based on an eight-hour working day and employer costs of an average of €240 per employer (including all ancillary wage costs), a decrease in productivity due to allergies of 10-30% corresponds to a loss of €24-72 per day per employer. The corresponding treatment costs are less than €1 per day per employer.

[Source: Eurostat]

10-30

One in every ten sick notes in Germany can be attributed to an allergy.

10

## INFORMATION & AWARENESS

Clear and reliable information needs to be available in order to change the public perception of allergic diseases. ECARF actively provides information about allergies and reports on rare disorders and new therapies. It is committed to keeping the public informed of research findings.

### MEDIA SUPPORT

ECARF actively seeks cooperation with leading media organisations and provides editorial support for reports on allergies and practical allergy advice columns in newspapers, interviews for customer magazines and science and health programmes.

### PATIENT SERVICES

In cooperation with allergy specialists, dermatologists and pulmonologists at Charité- Universitätsmedizin Berlin, the Foundation provides a comprehensive information and advice package, including an allergy self-test, checklists and brochures.

### ECARF SEAL OF QUALITY

ECARF has been certifying allergy-friendly products and services with the Seal of Quality since 2006. The Seal was developed in cooperation with experts from various fields.



The certified products are suitable for people with allergies and intolerances.

Consumer goods such as cosmetics, laundry and cleaning products, clothing, technological products, hotels and

catering services and other services all carry the seal. In accordance with the non-profit goals of the ECARF Foundation, there is no licence fee for using the Seal. Available in fifteen languages, it stands for certified quality.

---

### PRODUCT FINDER

You can find products and services certified by ECARF via the online product finder at [www.ecarf-label.org](http://www.ecarf-label.org).

---

## RESEARCH & SCIENCE

Successful allergy treatment relies on outstanding science and research based on high quality standards, networking and exchanging knowledge, and the implementation and monitoring of research results in practice.

ECARF actively promotes allergy research.

There are many ways to support research at Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin. The medical centre is the perfect place for scientists and practitioners to combine their expertise.

The ECARF Foundation supports several scientific research groups at the Allergie-Centrum-Charité. The work groups conduct foundational research with a focus on mast cells and B cells, the key cells involved in the allergic response.

As part of its research support, ECARF has established an endowed chair in dermatological allergology for conducting foundational research focused on mast cell biology, inflammatory reaction mechanisms, natural immunity against bacteria and other pathogens, autoallergy and neuroimmunology.

Two additional endowed chairs have been established by ECARF together with GA<sup>2</sup>LEN (Global Asthma and Allergy European Network).

### ECARF AND THE ALLERGIE-CENTRUM-CHARITÉ

The Allergie-Centrum-Charité has become one of the world's leading medical centres through the support of ECARF. It offers an exceptionally broad and specialised range of allergy patient consultation services and the latest treatment methods, and is recognised by international visitors for its high medical standards. Appointments are available, also for rare diseases.

# DONATIONS

Funding for the Foundation is based on several pillars and allows it to remain independent, which is essential to its long-term commitment.

Private and institutional donations are among the most important pillars.

Your donation will directly benefit the work of the Foundation.

Questions?

ECARF Foundation  
Donation Advice  
Matthias Colli  
+49 [0]30 85 74 894 05  
matthias.colli@ecarf.org

## DONATION ACCOUNT

**ECARF Foundation**  
**Deutsche Bank Essen**  
**IBAN: DE83360700500190004200**  
**BIC: DEUTDE3333**

### ONLINE DONATIONS

You can also transfer your donation to our account at the Bank für Sozialwirtschaft. Visit [www.ecarf.org](http://www.ecarf.org) and click on the blue donation button.

---

Stifterverband, the business community's innovation initiative for the German science system, oversees and endorses the use of the funds, which is kept transparent and targeted at all times.

---

# INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The ECARF Seal is  
present in (selection):

**AUSTRIA**  
**BELGIUM**  
**CANADA**  
**CHINA**  
**CROATIA**  
**DENMARK**  
**FRANCE**  
**GERMANY**  
**GREECE**  
**ITALY**  
**KOREA**  
**LIECHTENSTEIN**  
**NETHERLANDS**  
**POLAND**  
**PORTUGAL**  
**RUSSIA**  
**SPAIN**  
**SWITZERLAND**  
**TURKEY**  
**UNITED KINGDOM**  
**USA**



