



PR Contact:

Adam Bailine, Vice President, Marketing & Communications
(202) 466-7643, ext. 254
abailine@aafa.org

AAFA Co-Sponsored Report Provides Recommendations for Food Allergy Research, Treatment, and Policy

With support from the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine releases a monumental report that makes recommendations to increase our understanding of and approaches to food allergies

November 30, 2016, LANDOVER, MD – The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) applauds the release of a long-awaited report, *Finding a Path to Safety in Food Allergy: Assessment of the Global Burden, Causes, Prevention, Management, and Public Policy*, conducted by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine that recommends ways to increase our understanding of and approaches to food allergies.

As one of its 11 co-sponsors, AAFA notes that the report highlights that food allergy is a significant public health issue, and makes recommendations to increase public safety regarding food allergy and to improve the quality of life for those with food allergies. Recommendations also identify improvements that are needed in various settings, especially food establishments, child care, education, and the travel industry.

“This comprehensive report from the National Academies is a major step forward in our knowledge and understanding of how food allergy affects society,” said Cary Sennett, MD, PhD, FACP, AAFA’s President and CEO. “It provides a roadmap for those of us working every day to improve the lives of families with food allergy.”

The economic burden of food allergies on families is high; costs include not only out-of-pocket expenditures for medical services, but also the costs of allergen-free foods and special childcare arrangements. Food allergies are a growing food safety and public health concern. Each year, millions of Americans have allergic reactions to food. Although most food allergies cause relatively mild and minor symptoms, some food allergies can cause severe reactions, and may even be life-threatening. Food allergy affects approximately 5 percent of children and 4 percent of adults in the United States¹. Since there is no cure for food allergies^{2,3}, they present a substantial burden of illness for patients and their families, and have become a significant public health issue that extends beyond the clinical care setting. The report released today provides recommendations for institutions, schools, regulatory bodies, colleges, food manufacturers, and others in an effort to create safe environments for those with food allergies.



“This report is a call to action to all of us in this field,” said Meryl Bloomrosen, AAFA’s Senior Vice President for Policy, Advocacy and Research. “People with food allergies seek ways to live safely, without the day-to-day worry of anaphylaxis, a life-threatening allergic reaction. AAFA looks forward to continuing our work on behalf of patients and families living with food allergy. We expect to contribute even more, as we continue to expand the support we provide to families who are part of our [Kids With Food Allergies \(KFA\) community](#), and through the launch of [AAFA’s Food Allergy Patient & Family Registry](#) (Registry). The Registry is a Web-based program that collects, manages and analyzes data from and about people with food allergies. The Registry will help advance the kind of research this report calls for. Data from the Registry will provide a better understanding of what is important to people living with food allergies, such as quality of life. It will also provide critical information that researchers need to improve food allergy prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and management.”

About AAFA

Founded in 1953 and celebrating over 60 years of service, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) is the oldest and largest nonprofit patient organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through education, advocacy and research. AAFA provides practical information, community-based services, support and referrals through a national network of chapters and educational support groups. Through its Kids With Food Allergies division, AAFA offers the oldest, most extensive online support community for families raising children with food allergies. In addition, AAFA sponsors and advocates for research to advance the basic science relevant to treatment and cure. It also champions translational research so that the science that we have is applied more consistently and reliably. For more information, visit www.aafa.org, and www.kidswithfoodallergies.org. More information about AAFA’s Food Allergy Patient & Family Registry can be found at: <https://research.kidswithfoodallergies.org>.

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¹ <https://www.niaid.nih.gov/diseases-conditions/food-allergy>

² <http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm079311.htm>

³ <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/foodallergies/index.htm>