

The 26th Scientific Expert Conference of Paediatricians from the North-Eastern Region of Bosnia and Herzegovina: Allergy Problems in Children and Adolescents

The 26th Scientific Expert Conference of Paediatricians from the North-Eastern Region of Bosnia and Herzegovina took place in the Congress Hall of the Tuzla Hotel in the city of Tuzla, on 4th November 2017. The conference was very well organized, under the auspices of the scientific journal, the *Central European Journal of Paediatrics*, University Clinical Centre, Tuzla, the Department of Pediatrics of the University Clinical Center Tuzla, and the Pediatric Association of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The conference was organized according to tradition, by the founder, academician Husref Tahirović, professor emeritus of Pediatrics and Editor-in Chief of the *Central European Journal of Paediatrics*, the scientific journal of the University Clinical Centre Tuzla, Tuzla. About a hundred healthcare professionals, mostly paediatricians and family physicians from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina, attended the conference, whose main theme was allergy problems in children and adolescents. The prevalence of allergic diseases is increasing worldwide, particularly in low and middle income countries as they implement a Western lifestyle, and especially in children and adolescents. In addressing this major global challenge, the participants at the conference had the opportunity to hear about the most important allergy topics, such as life-threatening anaphylaxis, food allergies, allergen immunotherapy in asthma and rhinitis, drug and insect allergies and new diagnostic options.

The meeting was evaluated by the Tuzla Canton Medical Chamber, and the attendees were awarded a certificate and the current is-

sue of the *Central European Journal of Paediatrics*. The welcome and introductory address to the lecturers and attendants at the conference were given by the academician Husref Tahirović and Dr. Edin Husarić, PhD, the Head of the Department of Paediatrics of the University Clinical Centre, Tuzla.

The professional part of the conference started with a lecture given by assistant professor Marina Atanasković-Marković, from Tiršova University Children's Clinical Hospital, Belgrade, Serbia, about drug allergies. In her lecture, assistant professor Marina Atanasković-Marković presented the most common drugs associated with allergic reactions, the most frequent and the most severe type of allergic drug reactions, as well as examples and cases of the early and late types of drug reactions, and, finally, diagnostic algorithms together with the publications of her research group.

New knowledge about allergies to insect venom and its impact in clinical practice was presented by Dr. Peter Kopač from the University Clinic for Pulmonary Diseases and Allergy Golnik, Golnik, Slovenia. In addition to the basic information on diagnosis and treatment of anaphylactic reactions to hymenoptera venom, Dr. Peter Kopač presented new diagnostic methods, such as measurement of serum triptase, epitope-specific IgE antibodies and hymenoptera recombinant allergens, as well as their importance in clinical practice.

In the next lecture, assistant professor Marina Atanasković Marković presented the most common foods which cause allergic reactions, such as cow's milk, eggs and nuts,

followed by the clinical picture of a food allergy, diagnostic procedures, recognition of allergic reactions, and risk factors for the development of allergies to food.

The final presentation in the first part of the conference, entitled “Allergen specific immunotherapy in children with asthma and allergic rhinitis” was given by myself, Mirjana Turkalj. Allergen immunotherapy has been used to treat allergic diseases for more than 100 years. Despite broad evidence of clinical efficacy, allergen specific immunotherapy (both subcutaneous and sublingual) remains underused in the treatment of patients with allergic rhinitis and allergic asthma. The subcutaneous or sublingual routes are beneficial for mild and moderate allergic asthma, given that asthma is adequately controlled by pharmacotherapy. It is well known that allergen immunotherapy is the only etiological treatment that can change the course of an allergic disease by inducing allergen specific immune tolerance. Therefore, future strategies of allergen specific immunotherapy - including novel preparations, adjuvants and alternate routes of administration – have been initiated.

After the break, the conference continued with a lecture given by Dr. Denis Polančec, PhD, from Srebrnjak Children’s Hospital, Zagreb, Croatia, when the audience had an opportunity to become acquainted with the current, novel method of flow cytometry for

detection of activated basophils from patients allergic to food or insect stings.

In the last lecture, presented by assistant professor Ćosićkić from the Paediatric Clinic, University Clinical Centre, Tuzla, we had the opportunity to learn about the most common examples of anaphylactic reaction in children, with recommendations to paediatricians on how to recognize anaphylaxis caused by unusual triggers and how to treat them successfully.

I would like to emphasize the very lively discussion after each lecture, in which the participants were able to discuss doubtful cases from clinical practice and how to recognize and treat them successfully.

As in previous years, this conference was a great opportunity not only for education on the most important allergic diseases in children and adolescents, but also to discuss these topics, exchange ideas and dilemmas, and to enjoy time with colleagues from the region. In the end, I would like to thank the “spiritus movens” of the conference, academician Husref Tahirović and all the other hosts who made this meeting successful.

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Mirjana Turkalj, MD, PhD, Associate Professor of Paediatrics, Srebrnjak Children’s Hospital Zagreb, Medical School University J. J. Strossmayer Osijek, and the Croatian Catholic University, Zagreb, Croatia