



CollegeAdvantage®

A Publication of the American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

ACAAI.ORG

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We've got you - when it matters most!

Count on the College for reliable, current insights specifically tailored for you.

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American
College
of Allergy, Asthma
& Immunology



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

James M. Tracy, DO, FAAAAI
President, American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology

Taking action to support our members and the future of allergy

When you receive this issue of *College Advantage*, we'll be almost halfway through the year - the perfect time to pause and update our members on some of the projects we are undertaking to support you in your practice and support future allergists and leaders.

Each year, your Board of Regents approves a plan under Vision Forward, our ongoing strategic planning initiative. This plan identifies concrete goals in each area of the organization's operations, with specific tactics toward accomplishing those goals. The purpose of this planning is to ensure that we continue to deliver optimal resources and services for you, our members, according to your preferences, as well as industry best practices.

Some examples of the special projects we're undertaking this year (with great help from our committees) include: improvements to optimize the user experience on the College website; substantive content updates on our public website; making our Advocacy page more robust so members can more easily engage in advocacy activities; recruiting House of Delegates candidates in underrepresented states; and adding chemotherapeutics to our new Drug Allergy Protocol online library.

We've also developed a toolkit specifically for employed allergists; implemented a popular new "Breaking the Mold" series on Zoom with the Women in Allergy Committee; and awarded the first grant under the CA2PER program. These projects and tactics go above and beyond our everyday operations to address ongoing and future needs of allergists.

Turning attention to another exciting program, we're getting ready to launch the special initiative for my presidential year - a new program called Pathways to Practice: Advancing Excellence One Fellow at a Time (the P2P Program).

There is a growing shortage of practicing allergists, jeopardizing timely and adequate care for millions of patients. To address this concern, ACAAI will soon launch P2P to provide training support for several additional slots in US allergy/immunology training programs.

With a strong emphasis on training allergists who will enter community-based practice, P2P will help strengthen access to specialized care nationwide. This initiative marks a critical step in shaping the future of our specialty and ensuring that patients receive expert care from fellowship-trained, board-certified allergists. All interested and eligible Training Program Directors are encouraged to apply by Aug. 15.

Watch for more information about this program in July.

Finally, be sure to read the article on page 3 about our new Payer Education Campaign. The College is fighting back against payer practices that unfairly obstruct payment for allergy services. We've had some great success thus far, and we don't plan to let up any time soon.

I look forward to continuing to support each of you in your work to care for patients in these challenging times.

Connect with us at acaai.org or through:



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The Payer Education Campaign is fighting burdensome and unreasonable documentation requests for CPT 95165, 95115 and 95117 services

J. Allen Meadows, MD, FAAAAI; Executive Director of Advocacy and Government Affairs

College members have been receiving burdensome and unreasonable requests for documentation regarding CPT 95165, 95115 and 95117 services. These requests threaten the ability of allergists/immunologists and otolaryngologists to administer allergen immunotherapy and hinder the ability of patients with allergic conditions to obtain relief. In response, we've developed the Payer Education Campaign (PEC) to help allergists/immunologists educate payers about immunotherapy and provide guidance for the treatment and appropriate documentation for the service.

The PEC is a multi-faceted program that we are hoping will address a number of long-standing issues with the above codes. We have a special landing page on the College website where all our activities on this project are described and updated – be sure to check it out at college.acaaai.org/advocacy/issues-were-tracking/payer-education-campaign.

1. Invoices - We asked members for 2024 allergen invoices and collected hundreds of pages of invoices from many practices. With that data, we contacted CMS and requested that the costs for CPT code 95165 be revalued. The current direct cost input for CPT 95165 is \$8.96. We demonstrated that practice expense costs have increased considerably and requested that the cost input for 1 mL of antigen be increased to \$17.07. We hope CMS will honor our request.

2. Consensus paper - The College took the lead in developing a consensus paper with the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology and the American Academy of Otolaryngologic Allergy titled, "Guidance for the evaluation by payors of claims submitted using Current Procedural Terminology codes 95165, 95115, and 95117," which appeared in *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology* in January 2025.

The paper educates insurance carriers on immunotherapy treatment, what is reasonable to document treatment and which requests are not reasonable to verify allergy treatment. We recommend you include a copy of the consensus paper with all your appeals and highlight the appropriate sections of the document.

3. Medicare Administrative Contractors - For more than 20 years, Medicare has not paid for allergen extract dilutions.

Patients cannot receive immunotherapy without receiving dilutions in the initial treatment phases. It's important that dilutions are paid.

We've developed a plan to approach each of the seven Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) and ask them to revise their policies and begin to pay for allergy dilutions. At the time of this writing, we've thus far been successful with Palmetto, Noridian Healthcare Solutions and National Government Services. Those MACs cover more than 30 states and/or territories. We are planning our strategy for the remaining MACs and hope all MACs throughout the country will soon be paying for allergen extract dilutions.

It is helpful for us to partner with state allergy societies in the MAC regions. If you are the in the leadership of your state allergy society in one of the remaining MAC regions governed by Wisconsin Physicians Service, CGS Administrators, Novitas Solutions, or First Coast Service Options, reach out to AdvocacyCouncil@acaai.org **now!**

4. Private carriers - Anthem and United HealthCare (UHC) seem to be the payers causing members the most difficulty with unreasonable documentation requests; and so, we begin with them. While we've reached out to both carriers, at the time of this writing, we haven't received a response from either. We'll be asking for your help in the near future – watch the Advocacy Insider articles for more information.

5. Media - Since neither Anthem nor UHC has replied to our meeting requests, we have published the letters we sent to them, and we are engaging media to raise awareness that allergies are serious, and these two major carriers have ignored our requests to discuss these crucial policy issues.

While we are extremely proud of our achievements, there is still much work to be done. We'll be calling on you – be ready to join the fight.



The Advocacy Council - ADVOCATING FOR ALLERGISTS AND THEIR PATIENTS.

ACAAI – Your authoritative source on trending public health topics

In mid-2025, public health challenges abound, including vaccine hesitancy and recent disease outbreaks such as the serious rise in measles cases (including fatalities) in some states. While some of these situations are cyclical or seasonal, others persist and appear to be a growing concern. For example, vaccine coverage in children has decreased since 2021.

In such times, it's important to have access to current and complete information. But that information is not always easy to find. Recent changes in federal government policy and staffing have meant that government websites may not be as up to date as we've come to expect. Or the data and recommendations presented on agency websites may not address important public health topics in the same way that physicians and other public health stakeholders have grown accustomed to.

While there are still many places to find accurate and timely information, both physician education and patient education content vary widely in quality as well as relevance to College members.

For these reasons and more, the College strives to be responsive by developing, curating and providing up-to-date and relevant information for allergists, immunologists and their patients about top public health issues, just as we did at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thanks to College committees and subject matter experts who give of their time, and staff with specialized health communication training, our members can look to ACAAI as a quality source for public health information relevant to the specialty.

In recent years, on the College website, we created the COVID-19 Resource Center, with links to external sources as well as original ACAAI content and recommendations. Similarly, we created a Racial Disparities and Health Equity Resource Center to gather in one place our most relevant educational and information materials, including online learning modules, journal articles, and links to other allergy/immunology organizations. Both of these resource pages are updated regularly for our members' use.

Most recently, we have created a new Outbreaks and Vaccine Information page on the College site at college.acaa.org/vaccine-outbreak-resources. Here we have curated the best information on measles and

other regional disease outbreaks; seasonal respiratory virus stats; and data as well as recommendations about vaccine coverage and vaccine hesitancy.

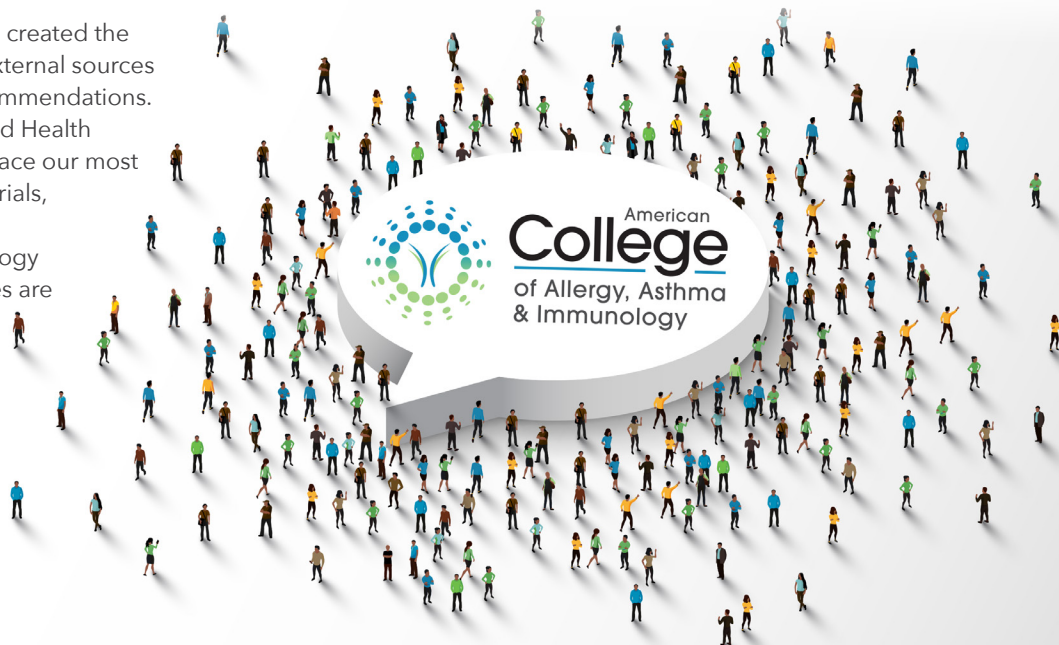
Breaking news, FDA approvals, recalls, and other health agency alerts are gathered each week in *College Insider* and pushed directly to members via email when needed.

The College's education team also stays responsive with fresh MicroCME, AllergyTalk podcast episodes, and other products that are responsive to emerging trends and topics.

And with on-demand publishing of new articles in *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology*, our journal is a top resource for the specialty with original research, systematic reviews, and other trending data and information. Plus, our *Allergy Watch* publication provides a scan of all the top allergy/immunology journals six times a year, which is a gold mine of information on hot topics in the field.

Guidance documents and tools represent another important set of resources that we curate for our members on important areas of diagnosis and treatment. These include Practice Parameters, Yardsticks, e-Yardsticks, position papers and more. You'll find these on various pages and in toolkits on the College site, and they'll also appear in our topical resource lists in the College Learning Connection and in *College Insider*.

For trusted, timely, accessible and authoritative information on today's trending topics, bookmark College.acaa.org, and watch your ACAAI communications for updates on important developments in public health that affect allergy/immunology practice.





Podium to Practice®
INSPIRING VISION
 NOVEMBER 6-10
 ORLANDO, FLORIDA



“Inspiring Vision” at the ACAAI 2025 Annual Scientific Meeting

You expect excellence - and we deliver! Join us for the most influential global forum for allergy care.

We’re gearing up for an exciting 2025 ACAAI Annual Scientific Meeting, Nov. 6-10 in Orlando! As the leader in education for practicing allergists/immunologists, the College is planning a meeting to help you navigate the ever-changing health care environment.

The meeting’s theme - Inspiring Vision - is an apt descriptor for what you’ll learn and experience - updated treatment approaches, forward-thinking discussions, the latest science, and practical takeaways you’ll be inspired to use in your practice every day. Here are some highlights:

Excellence on Thursday - Explore allergic skin conditions at this full-day event featuring in-depth presentations on enhanced diagnostic techniques and emerging management strategies.

Podium to Practice® sessions - Learn dynamic, practical tips for patient care on a wide variety of allergic/immunologic conditions: anaphylaxis, asthma, immune disorders, skin conditions and more.

Hands-on instruction - Choose from our selection of workshops. They are second to none for experiential learning to improve and expand your clinical services.

Practice enhancement - Get solutions to issues your practice encounters with sessions for allergists and the entire team.

Connections - Reconnect or make new friends - the ACAAI meeting is the best place to network with colleagues.



Continued next page



"As always, plenary sessions will cover hot topics in allergy/immunology," said Kristin D. Sokol, MD, MS, FAAAAI, Annual Meeting Program Chair. "Highlights include exciting new developments in severe asthma, practical approaches to drug allergy evaluation and treatment, and the future of allergy and immunology therapeutics."

And the excellence you expect continues with returning favorites like the **Literature Review**, the **7 for 11** sessions

on food allergy and pediatric allergic conditions, and the **Jeopardy-style session** on identifying rashes.

The program is perfect for any career stage - whether you are a veteran allergist or a Fellow-in-Training. The educational event of the year that you count on to improve your practice and enhance your patient care keeps getting better and better. Registration opens this summer.

Focus on skin

Include the Thursday Program in your ACAAI Annual Meeting registration to explore allergic conditions of the skin.

We're kicking off the 2025 ACAAI Annual Scientific Meeting on Nov. 6 in Orlando with a full day devoted to allergic conditions of the skin. Plan to attend this all-day immersive program and learn from experts in allergy, dermatology and immunology.

"The all-day 'Spotlight on Allergic Conditions of the Skin' program will be a standout feature of the 2025 ACAAI Annual Scientific Meeting," said Kristin D. Sokol, MD, MS, FAAAAI, Annual Meeting Program Chair. "This session will delve into the latest science surrounding allergic skin disorders - from atopic dermatitis to urticaria and angioedema to contact dermatitis - and equip allergists with practical, evidence-based insights they can immediately apply in their clinical practice."

What can you expect from this one-of-a-kind event?

- In-depth presentation on angioedema, chronic spontaneous urticaria, atopic dermatitis, contact dermatitis and drug allergy, led by international experts
- A luncheon presentation on itch pathways and innovative approaches to alleviate chronic itch
- A spirited ProCon debate on controversial topics in the management of allergic skin diseases

The Annual Meeting runs from Nov. 6-10. When you make plans to attend the meeting, make sure your travel plans include the Thursday program!

Registration for the Annual Meeting opens this summer.





Your practice can be a powerhouse

Allergists - and their entire teams - will be pumped up with our Annual Meeting programs focused on allergy practices

Bring your entire team to Orlando this fall for the ACAAI 2025 Annual Scientific Meeting! The **Advanced Practice Health Care Providers Course, Allied Health Professionals Course** and **Practice Management Program** will equip you and your team with the latest knowledge and skills for the best patient care and an efficient practice.

Registration for these programs is included in the Annual Meeting registration fee. Attendees of the courses can also attend other sessions throughout the Annual Meeting! Registration opens this summer.

The **Advanced Practice Health Care Providers Course on Friday, Nov. 7** and the **Allied Health Program on Saturday, Nov. 8** will equip your allergy practice team with evidence-based knowledge to better inform and support patients.

The programs offer a unique blend of sessions for a thorough exploration of allergy and asthma care, presenting an unparalleled opportunity to enhance your patient care with the latest advancements, debunked myths, and practical management strategies.

Advanced Practice Health Care Providers sessions include:

- "Help Me, I'm Swelling: Overview of Angioedema" - a discussion of evaluation and treatment and a presentation of case studies
- "Navigating the OIT Journey" - information on patient selection, office logistics and patient and family responsibilities
- "Why Am I Sick Again?" - a review of immunodeficiency evaluation and diagnostics and case applications
- "When Food Fights Back" - information on alpha-gal allergy, pollen-food syndrome and anaphylaxis cofactors

The Allied Health Program features:

- "Allergy Myth Busters" - an exploration of symptom misinterpretation, natural remedies, and food and additive myths
- "Back to the Basics: Mechanisms, Medications, and Management" - a discussion of allergic mechanisms, pharmacotherapy and management strategies

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- “Is That Asthma or an Imposter?” – covering asthma mimickers and treatment
- “The ABCs of Food Allergy Diagnostics” – information on history-taking, diagnostics and oral food challenges

The **Practice Management Program (PMP) on Friday, Nov. 7** will offer a diverse and informative series of sessions designed to address key challenges in allergy practice management, coding, and operational efficiency.

Each session of the PMP is designed to provide actionable insights, practical strategies, and ample opportunities for discussion to foster growth and efficiency within allergy practices. **Physicians and practice managers will benefit from this one-day program.**

Kicking off the day are:

- “2025 Allergy Coding Update” – essential insights into the latest coding changes for allergy practices
- “Difficult Coding Cases” – practical solutions for complex coding challenges
- “Practice Management Resources” – tools and strategies to enhance practice operations. This session will be

followed by open questions and discussions, encouraging collaboration and learning.

In the second segment, the program focuses on boosting revenue and operational efficiency. Dynamic information will include:

- “Strategies for Revenue Growth and Operational Efficiency” – valuable insights from speakers with a range of expertise
- “Metrics That Matter” – key performance indicators (KPIs) and their relationship to relative value units (RVUs)

The afternoon sessions explore specialized topics, including:

- “95165: Where Are We Now?” – expert information on 95165
- “Putting AI Into Practice” – a panel discussion on this hot topic
- “Optimizing Team Communication and Strategic HR Planning” – tips to attract talent
- “If You Build It, They Will Come” – how to leverage marketing to help you thrive in an environment of increased competition

Don't miss the opportunity to pump up your team's skills!

Contribute your expertise to the ACAAI 2025 Annual Meeting

Submit your abstract! We're seeking dynamic research and unique medically challenging cases

Submit your compelling Scientific Research or Medically Challenging Case for presentation at the ACAAI 2025 Annual Scientific Meeting, Nov. 6-10 in Orlando.

The abstract submission site is open and the deadlines are:

- Scientific Research Abstracts: **July 7, 2025**, 5:00 pm CT.
- Medically Challenging Case Abstracts: **Aug. 1, 2025**, 5:00 pm CT.

Late-breaking Abstracts are returning in 2025! If you have innovative research results that weren't available by the regular abstract deadline, you may qualify to submit your results as a Late-breaking Abstract. This special category of abstracts must feature the latest information on clinical research. Submit between **Sept. 9 - Oct. 9, 2025** at 5:00 pm CT. *A limited number of abstracts will be accepted in this category.*

Submit your abstract online at annualmeeting.acaa.org/2025/submit_abstract.cfm.

More details:

- All abstracts accepted for oral or ePoster presentation at the ACAAI 2025 Annual Scientific Meeting **must be presented in person.**
- Encore abstracts are not permitted.
- Abstracts selected for oral and poster presentations will be published in an online November supplement to the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology*.
- Fellows-in-Training who submit a Research Abstract may apply for a Clemens von Pirquet award. Visit annualmeeting.acaa.org/2025/submit_abstract.cfm for more details.



FITs – Apply for Annual Meeting awards and scholarships

Fellows-in-Training (FITs): Be recognized for your outstanding research or unique challenging cases and apply for a FIT scholarship to attend the 2025 Annual Scientific Meeting, Nov. 6-10 in Orlando!

Clemens von Pirquet Awards - Up to three FITs will be recognized for the best research abstracts on any aspect of allergy/immunology or related fields. To be considered, you must indicate that you wish to apply for a Clemens von Pirquet Award on the abstract submission site. Information on the criteria and application requirements are available at annualmeeting.acaa.org/2025/submit_abstract.cfm.



Applications and materials must be received by **July 7, 2025 at 5:00 pm CT.**

The Abstract Review Committee selects the award-winning abstracts. Award winners present their research during educational sessions in the general meeting. Winners will receive cash awards from \$1,000 to \$2,500 and are eligible for a scholarship to attend the Annual Meeting. Questions? Contact education@acaa.org.

FIT scholarships - The College provides scholarships to FITs in North American accredited training programs to attend the Annual Meeting. FITs who have completed their fellowship in 2025 are still eligible for these scholarships. The application, due by **Aug. 22, 2025**, is available at annualmeeting.acaa.org/2025/submit_abstract.cfm. For more information, contact Karla Kaschub, Director of Membership, at karlakaschub@acaa.org.

International FIT Travel Scholarship - The Allergists' Foundation is offering travel scholarships for up to two international Fellows-in-Training with an accepted research abstract or medically challenging case to attend the College's 2025 Annual Scientific Meeting. Abstracts must be fully submitted by the established deadlines: **July 7, 2025** for a research abstract and **Aug. 1, 2025** for a medically challenging case. The travel scholarship application must be returned to the Foundation no later than **July 1**, prior to the submission deadlines. Find the scholarship application at annualmeeting.acaa.org/2025/submit_abstract.cfm.



How to use patient satisfaction surveys to improve your allergy practice

As an allergist, you know satisfied patients are key to the success of your practice. Do you take steps to actively measure and improve patient satisfaction?

A majority of College Practice Management Committee (PMC) members conduct patient satisfaction surveys. According to a recent poll, practices that do surveys were a mix of large institutions and small-to-large-size private practices. Most of the practices not doing surveys were solo practices.

Do you know why and how to do patient surveys, and what to do with the results? Do patient surveys negatively impact physician wellness? We've got survey "how-to's," as well as the inside scoop from PMC members on how allergy practices use these surveys to improve.

The "why"

Patient satisfaction surveys help allergy practices find out how they're doing - and what their patients want. You can't fix problems you don't know about, so a proactive approach to improving patient experience is essential to your practice's success. Another bonus? If you're participating in MIPS, doing regular patient satisfaction surveys counts as an Improvement Activity (# IA_BE_6).

Patient satisfaction surveys also let patients know you care about them and their experience. One word of warning, however: don't ask for patient input if you're not open to

listening and making changes. Patients will get frustrated if they continue to report the same problems without seeing any improvement.

The "how"

Surveys don't have to be a burden on your practice. Here are our tips to keep it simple.

1 Take advantage of technology.

All participating PMC members use email, texting or a patient portal to distribute surveys; one also uses paper surveys. A variety of vendors are used by PMC members: Press Ganey, Solutionreach, Phreesia, Clinician Box, Rater8 and Interactive Customer Evaluation were all mentioned as useful tools. (Note: the College does not endorse any of these products).

2 Keep it short.

Practice management experts recommend keeping your survey short and simple - no more than 10 questions.

3 Ask key questions.

One survey question came up again and again among PMC members as the most important: *Would you recommend our practice to your family and friends?*

"In my opinion, the most important survey question is 'Would you recommend the practice to family and friends?'" said David Mari, DO. "If yes, the follow-up question should be 'What experience led you to recommend our practice?' If no, 'What can we do to better serve you?' This helps illuminate what keeps patients happy as well as issues that drive patients away. The most useful questions are those that lead to positive change. In the future, open questions followed by AI analysis might lead to more meaningful feedback to find trends."

4 Aim for a 10-20% response rate.

If your response rate is much lower, you may not get statistically significant results.

5 Survey regularly.

Your goal should be continuous improvement of the patient experience, and you need ongoing feedback to properly track performance.

The results

The whole point of patient satisfaction surveys is to use the results to improve your practice. Here are our pointers:

1 Share results with your team.

Set goals for your practice and report on performance monthly. Brainstorm together at employee and physician meetings on ways to improve. Celebrate wins and learn together from mistakes.

"In a previous practice, we regularly reviewed feedback with operations and physicians and trended the data monthly. We also provided a yearly bonus to staff if they improved by a meaningful amount," said PMC member Todd McGee.

2 Focus on changes that improve the patient experience.

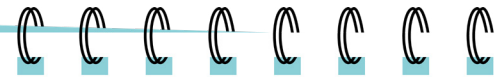
Patient access is a good place to start. "My practice implemented several changes based on survey feedback," notes M. Razi Rafeeq, MD, FACAAL. "The most important was expanding allergy injection hours starting at 8:00 am twice a week and late hours twice a week for the convenience of after school/after work patients."

3 Make sure staff has "skin in the game."

Set clear patient satisfaction expectations for every team member. Make patient experience part of their performance review. "We track patient satisfaction scores daily, weekly, and monthly. These scores are so important that we report them to our entire company and established a 'Silver Service' program, where clinic staff can receive a bonus each month. The bonus is based upon several factors, including a Net Promoter Score, which measures whether the patient would refer a family member or friend to this provider/practice," said Scott McCutcheon, MHA.

4 Communicate improvements to patients.

Let patients know you're making improvements based on their surveys. Post updates on social media and your patient portal. (Several PMC members said positive surveys post directly to Google reviews.) Add a page to your website and/or a sign in your waiting room that says, "You spoke, we listened." Consider adding an update to your telephone hold message with information about improvements.



PATIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY QUICK TIPS

1. Make it short and simple.
2. Take advantage of technology.
3. Aim for a 10-20% response rate.
4. Make it anonymous – but give patients an option to provide their name if they'd like to be contacted.
5. Always ask: Would you recommend our practice to your family and friends?
6. Focus on improving patient experience.
7. Share results with providers and staff.
8. Communicate improvements to patients.
9. Survey regularly with a goal of continuous improvement.

Surveys and physician evaluations

Some employed physicians said they receive bonuses based in part on patient satisfaction scores. For those physicians, it is frustrating to be scored on things outside of their control, like staffing issues or long phone wait times. "Patient satisfaction surveys should ensure physicians are evaluated on aspects of their practice that they can control," said Madeleine S. Ramos, MD, FACAAL.

Accordingly, organizations looking to use these surveys to evaluate physicians should consider alternative questions. Suggestions include:

- Did the physician know your medical history?
- Did the physician spend enough time with you?
- Did the physician adequately address your concerns?

Patient satisfaction surveys can really benefit your allergy practice if you do them regularly and you use the results to drive improvement. Use these tips and get started today!



FITS team up with AllergyTalk

Kylie Jungles MD, Senior FIT Representative



Have you ever wanted to catch up on the latest breaking research articles in allergy but didn't have the time to sit down and sift through the literature? Have you ever wished you could catch up on CME during your commute? If so, the College's AllergyTalk

podcast is what you've been looking for!

The FIT Committee is excited to announce that we will be teaming up with AllergyTalk to bring you episodes specifically geared toward FITs. Our first episode will discuss the ins and outs of applying to jobs after fellowship. This episode is coming soon, so stay tuned!

AllergyTalk is the perfect way for fellows to brush up on key topics relevant to board studying and stay up to date on current research articles. Podcast hosts Dr. Stanley Fineman and Dr. Gerald Lee discuss the latest topics in allergy/immunology and bring together experts in the field to review clinical diagnoses and key articles from *AllergyWatch*. Recent guests have included Dr. Vivian Hernandez Trujillo and Dr. Iris Otani, who have discussed various topics including the impact of biologics on vaccine immunity and the mental health impacts of food allergies.

Each podcast episode is brief, typically less than 30 minutes in length, which is the perfect length of time to catch up on during your commute, at the gym, or even during a lunch break! You can access the AllergyTalk podcast on the ACAAI College Learning Connection (education.acaai.org/allergytalk), Spotify, or Apple Podcasts. If you are interested in being a podcast moderator or have ideas of what you'd like to hear next on AllergyTalk, please reach out to me at kylie_n_jungles@rush.edu.

Your College member benefits include SMART resources

SMART (Single Maintenance and Reliever Therapy) has gained attention as an asthma treatment that uses the same inhaler for maintenance and relief of symptoms.

Angela Hogan, MD, FAAAAI, Chair of the ACAAI Asthma Committee, developed an infographic allergists can use to explain SMART therapy to patients. The bright graphics and easy-to-follow information illustrate the benefits of SMART therapy. College members can use the infographic with their patients. Find it on the College members website at college.acaai.org.

The College has other resources about SMART therapy.

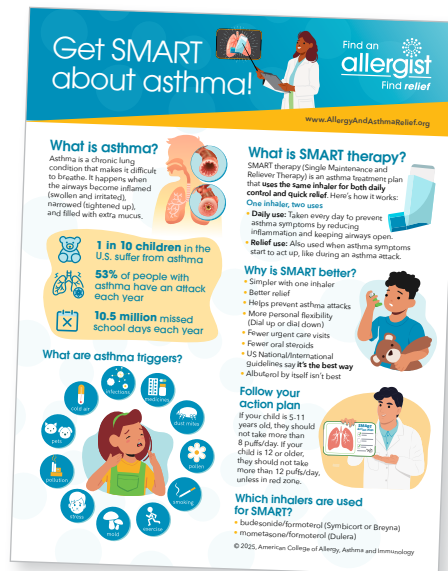
The recent webinar, "Practical Guide to Implementing AIR and SMART" provides key information on the effectiveness of AIR and SMART and how to implement these therapies in your practice.

Find this webinar and others at education.acaai.org/cwcwebinars. Members can view webinars at no charge.

Learn when to appropriately treat patients with ICS+SABA and ICS+LABA in about 20 minutes with our MicroCME module. Another MicroCME module, "Is SMART Therapy a Thing for Pediatric Asthma?" was presented at the 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting and explores SMART therapy and biologics for the pediatric population. Find both modules at education.acaai.org/microcme.

In *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology*, read the 2024 article about adoption and implementation of maintenance and reliever therapy for adults. Find it at [annals.org/article/S1081-1206\(24\)00363-6/fulltext](http://annals.org/article/S1081-1206(24)00363-6/fulltext).

Use your College member benefits to learn about SMART therapy and share your expertise with your patients.



New titles in our online patient brochure series

Patients are often looking for information on their allergic conditions. As a member benefit, the College has created user-friendly online brochures you can download and offer to your patients to explain allergic conditions. Find the brochures at college.acaai.org/patient-public-brochures-for-printing.

Several new titles have been added to the brochure series in English and Spanish. The latest topics are:

- Breathe Easy Again: Your Guide to Understanding and Managing Sinusitis
- Chronic Spontaneous/Idiopathic Urticaria
- Drug Allergies - What you Need to Know to Stay Safe
- Food Allergies (updated)
- Immunotherapy Treatments for Allergies
- Managing Your Allergies During Pregnancy
- Your Guide to Understanding Penicillin Allergy

Other current topics include:

- Asthma in Children
- Eczema (English only)
- EoE
- Rhinitis

Practices can use our brochures several ways:

- Securely text or email them to patients.
- Post them on your practice website.
- Link to them in your practice EHR where they can be added to the patient's after-visit summary.
- Upload them to a patient's portal account as part of the after-visit summary.
- Print them out and hand them to patients during visits.

More topics are coming soon!



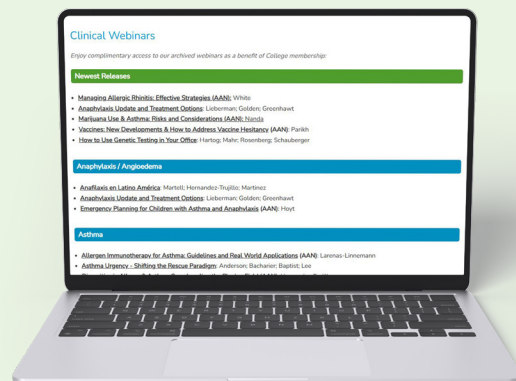


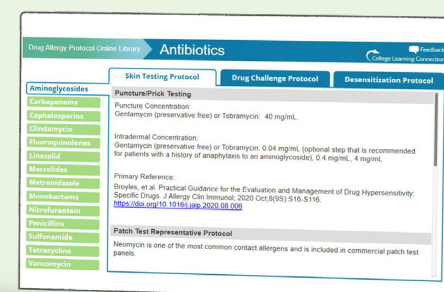
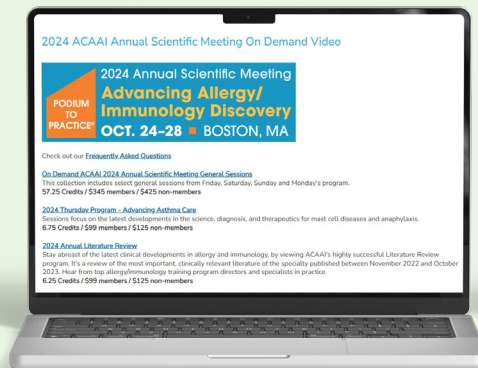
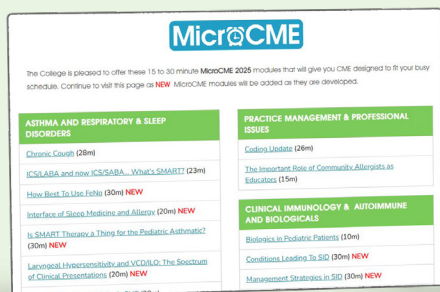
What's new at the College Learning Connection? Explore your new educational member resources

Need to put on your educator hat? Check out our new slide decks and teaching tools for anaphylaxis, food allergy and Type 2 Inflammatory disease. Find them at education.acaai.org/content/allergy-teaching-tools. **Free** to members.

Need Practice Assessment/Quality Improvement credit for MOC? We've got the new Atopic Dermatitis PI CME module here: education.acaai.org/atopicdermatitispicme. **Free** to members.

Find dozens of recorded webinars on clinical topics here: education.acaai.org/clcwebinars. **Free** to members.





We've added 27 new MicroCME modules. Head to education.acaai.org/microcme to see the latest curated lectures including:

- Anaphylaxis & new treatments
- Biologics for pediatrics
- Chronic cough
- Drug desensitization
- Food Allergy in Perinatal
- Managing EGID
- Managing type 3 angioedema
- Pediatric SLIT
- SMART therapy
- And much more

All MicroCME modules are **free** to members.

Did you know? If you attended the ACAAI 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting (in person or via livestream) you have **free** access to more than 50 hours of recorded presentations from Boston? Log in and check your Course in Progress or go to: education.acaai.org/ondemand.

Want to stay up to date? Don't forget about our Self-Assessment programs and board review products.

- ACAAI Board Review Book
- Allergy & Immunology Modules (AIM) Volumes 1 and 2 (and volume 3 is coming soon!)

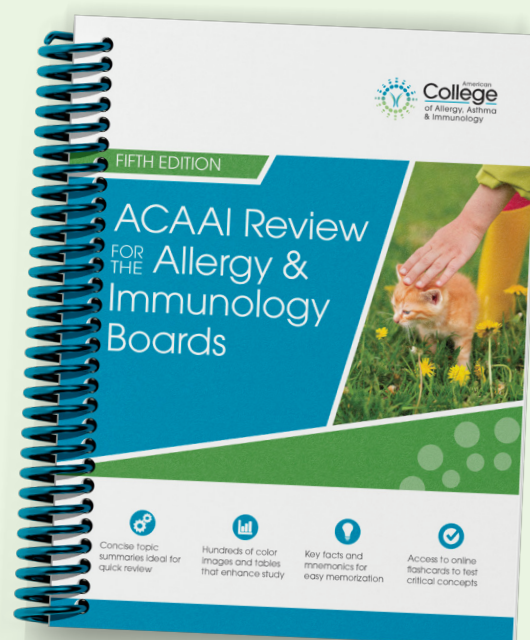


- Asthma biologics
- FIT Corner: Board Review Quizzes, and more.
- Safe Steroid Use

Don't miss these other great resources designed for your practice. Use these interactive tools designed for implementing guidelines in your practice - **free** for members. Find our eParameters and eYardsticks at education.acaai.org/eparameters. They include:

- Atopic Dermatitis
- CRS eYardstick
- Food Allergy eYardstick
- Pediatric Asthma eYardstick
- PID eParameter

Our new Drug Allergy Protocol Library is a comprehensive collection of protocols that provide evidence-based strategies for understanding and implementing drug allergy testing protocols. Find it at education2.acaai.org/DAPOL/story.html.



Exploring perspectives on penicillin testing during pregnancy

The Allergists' Foundation Community Grant Program funds projects conducted by practicing allergists to address

unmet needs and remove barriers to allergy care. Lulu R. Tsao, MD, was excited to take advantage of this grant opportunity to explore perspectives of patients and obstetrics (OB) providers

on penicillin testing during pregnancy. We asked Dr. Tsao, our 2022 grant recipient, to tell us about her project and the insights she's gained.

What inspired you to apply for the Community Grant?

We had started a prenatal penicillin testing program at our center in 2019 and had seen many similar programs develop across the country. Given the large number of women of childbearing age who could benefit from penicillin allergy evaluation and the increasing data on safety of testing in pregnancy, the Community Grant represented an opportunity to bring patients' and OB providers' voices into this work. We felt that having their perspectives was critical for us to be able to enhance our approach and create the best possible experience for our pregnant patients.

What challenges did you come across that you did not anticipate and how did you overcome them?

We felt it was very important to hear diverse perspectives from pregnant and postpartum patients beyond the allergy

clinic. As such, we wanted to recruit participants who had not been referred or previously undergone testing, and who might be more hesitant about testing during pregnancy. This proved more challenging than anticipated, but we were fortunate to collaborate with our OB colleagues, including clinical research coordinators who were already embedded in the OB clinics and helped us identify these patients. Ultimately, half of the patients we interviewed had not undergone penicillin testing during pregnancy. They provided valuable perspectives on initial impressions about this testing and helped us understand what questions they felt were important for an allergist to answer.

What did you learn that may be of benefit to other allergists?

We learned that there are many factors that go into patients' decision-making about penicillin testing during pregnancy, based on their prior history of reaction, pregnancy course, timing of referral, and pregnancy-specific risks and benefits. Many patients voiced that they would have liked to learn about penicillin allergy testing preconception or earlier in pregnancy. It's therefore essential for allergists to be proactive in addressing penicillin allergy in women of childbearing age. In addition, allergists can provide a lot of value by continuing to educate our referral base, including primary care, family medicine, and OB/GYN. It's important these providers have a clear understanding of the pregnancy-specific benefits of this testing for patients who are interested in pursuing it before or during pregnancy.

To learn more about the Community Grant Program, visit college.acaa.org/grants. Have an idea you'd like to get funded? Look for the call for applications this fall or email us at foundation@acaai.org.



Meet the 2025 CA²PER Grant recipients

The College's Community and Academic Allergists Partnership in Education and Research (CA²PER) program, a new initiative launched last fall, supports practice-based translational research conducted in collaboration between academic and community-based allergists.



Members of the CA²PER Task Force received many strong applications and have selected a project led by Wanda Phipatanakul, MD, MS, FAAAAI and Jordan E. Scott, MD of Boston, Massachusetts, in our first CA²PER grant cycle. They have been awarded \$99,000 for an innovative project titled, **"Leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Predict Side Effects and Treatment Outcomes in Oral Immunotherapy (OIT) for Patients with Food Allergies."**



Wanda Phipatanakul, MD



Jordan E. Scott, MD

Allergists face a high level of unpredictability for how their patients will respond to OIT, as the mechanisms underlying the success or failure of OIT are not completely understood. As such, the standard of care for OIT relies heavily on a trial-and-error approach to determine appropriate dosing and escalation schedules, increasing the risk of adverse events. The project takes a transformative approach to managing OIT with the use of AI-powered technology.

"Advances in artificial intelligence offer a unique opportunity to address the many challenges we face in implementing OIT," said Dr. Phipatanakul. "AI-driven tools can provide clinicians with personalized insights that inform treatment

decisions and reduce the reliance on trial-and-error methods."

She added, "I am honored to receive this grant award from the ACAAI CA²PER Program. Dr. Jordan Scott and I have been friends and colleagues for decades, collaborating in many capacities. This project presents the perfect opportunity to formally bridge academic and community allergists to guide and inform how we help our patients."

Their project aims to revolutionize OIT by introducing AI-powered risk stratification and personalized treatment planning. The goals of the project are three-fold:

1. Develop a foundational AI model using demographic and clinical data to predict OIT outcomes and risks.
2. Enhance predictive accuracy by incorporating cytokine profiles.
3. Deploy the AI model in a clinical setting to evaluate its impact on real-world OIT outcomes.

The team ultimately seeks to provide clinicians with actionable insights to improve patient outcomes, reduce adverse events, and advance precision medicine. Identifying cytokine profiles associated with OIT success or failure may offer valuable insights into the biological mechanisms of food allergy, which can help shape guidelines on dosing strategies and personalized escalation schedules to optimize the balance between safety and efficacy.

"I am looking forward to partnering with Dr. Phipatanakul on this important project," said Dr. Scott. "This work will enable us to utilize artificial intelligence to predict side effects and treatment outcomes of oral immunotherapy in patients with food allergies. It will also play a crucial role in training the next generation in AI."

"We have a wonderful team," added Dr. Phipatanakul. "I would like to formally acknowledge and thank my fellow, Dr. Thinh (Henry) Nguyen, for spearheading this important work, as well as his co-fellow, Dr. Saleh Alsulami, for his contributions to this effort. We are confident our research will help us gain important insights that have the potential to pave the way to safer and more effective OIT protocols."

To learn more about the CA²PER Grant Program, visit college.acaai.org/CA2PER. We will share updates on this project and share information on how you can apply for your own CA²PER grant during the 2026 cycle. We'll be accepting applications again at the end of the summer.

100 years of allergy care

The Oklahoma Allergy & Asthma Clinic was established in 1925 and continues to provide allergy and asthma care.

The Oklahoma Allergy & Asthma Clinic (OAAC), located in Oklahoma City, celebrates 100 years of providing allergy and asthma care in 2025.

Founded in 1925 by a single physician, Dr. Ray Balyeat, it was originally named The Balyeat Hay Fever and Asthma Clinic, at a time when allergy and asthma treatment was just emerging. Balyeat wrote several books on allergic conditions, including "Hay-fever and Asthma, Their Cause, Prevention and Treatment" in 1928 and "Allergic Diseases: Their Diagnosis and Treatment" in 1936.

Today, the Oklahoma Allergy and Asthma Clinic includes a team of 13 allergy and asthma specialists, providing care to more than 32,000 patients.

"This clinic has been and remains a leader in allergy and asthma care," said Dr. Dean Atkinson, OAAC Board President and a provider at the clinic since 1993. "Through the years, we have grown into one of the largest clinics in the region and

nation, dedicated to the cutting-edge treatment of allergies and asthma."

"For anything in Oklahoma to be over 100 years old and to be under the same umbrella of leadership is impressive. I am proud to be a part of that," said John Bozalis, MD, who retired

from the clinic in 2012 after caring for patients for more than 40 years.

OAAC patient Robert Streets, 72, said his family has been coming to the clinic for care since the 1920s. "OAAC professionals have literally kept generations of this family alive over the last century," Streets said.

OAAC providers currently include these physicians: Claire Atkinson, MD, Dean Atkinson, MD, FAAAAI, Laura K. Chong, MD, FAAAAI, Maya Gharfeh, MD, Richard T. Hatch, MD, FAAAAI, Bret R. Haymore, MD, FAAAAI, Gregory M. Metz, MD, FAAAAI, Patricia I. Overhulser, MD, and Shahan A. Stutes, MD.

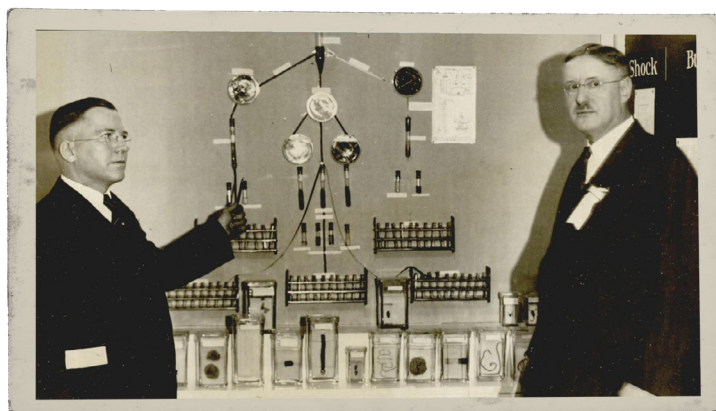


Photo credit: AP

The American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology – your home for everything related to A/I practice

You're one of 6,000+ allergists/ immunologists and allied health professionals who consider the American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (ACAAI) their "home" for everything related to the specialty.

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Practice management tools for allergists - all in one easy to use location!



The College Practice Management Center
at college.acaai.org/pmc has a wealth of toolkits just a few clicks away:



Prior Authorization - Create customized, scientifically based appeal letters for 15 different drug/disease combinations - each in under 10 minutes. Try our newest PA letters for Xolair/Food Allergy and Neffy/Anaphylaxis.



Coding - Get expert help with complex allergy coding questions. Our Coding FAQ database should be your go-to for coding issues.



Allergen Extract Mixing - Get all the resources you need to implement the USP 797 rule for mixing allergen extracts.



FIT and New Allergist - Find all the resources you need to get started in practice, plus help choosing and negotiating your first position as an allergist.



Human Resources - Find resources to hire, motivate and coach employees, and get sample HR documents.



Relative Value Unit (RVU) - Learn what RVUs are and why they're important for both practice owners and employed allergists.



Biologics - Get the clinical and practice resources you need to use biologics effectively.



Appeals and Denials - Get strategies to prevent claim denials plus sample appeal letters for common allergy denials.



Marketing and Patient Materials - Use these resources to reach and educate patients and the community about the essential services you provide.



Shared Decision-Making - Our 5 SDM toolkits help you work with patients to determine the treatment that best fits their needs. For Asthma, Pediatric Asthma, Atopic Dermatitis, CRSwNP and Immunotherapy.



Practice Parameter and Yardstick - Find practice parameter and yardstick resources, which provide evidence-based recommendations to help with day-to-day clinical management decisions.



Office-based Anaphylaxis - This educational and clinical toolkit provides interactive training scenarios and resources for your office.



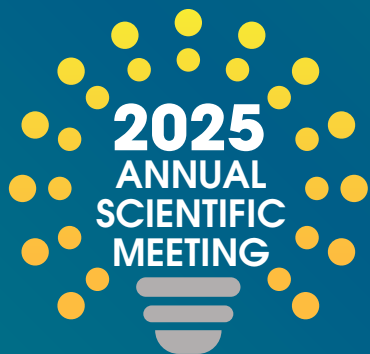
Practice Profitability - Get resources for financial benchmarking, maximizing profits and improving efficiency.

Plus, take our 10-minute Practice Assessment Quiz! We'll assess your strategies and policies in key practice management areas. You'll get a list of recommended College resources based on your answers.

**Find out how the College's toolkits
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