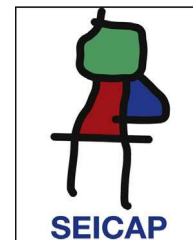




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IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue of A&I



A new year starts for A&I, with the specific aim of maintaining a high standard of quality and a speedy publication process. In this issue of the journal the reader will find that in the same way as in the last two issues of 2014, the number of papers is greater than usual. This situation is also planned for issue 2 of 2015, in an attempt to catch up with the material that has been accumulating during 2013 and 2014, due to the unexpected publication demand from researchers all over the world. With this strategy, in combination with the online-only publication policy started in the past year and which allows for more pages per issue, we expect to have much more reasonable times between online and formal publication. A collateral effect of all these adaptive changes is that the rejection rate of A&I will probably grow if its popularity among researchers remains high. Additionally, a certain decrease in its impact factor for 2014 is also anticipated. Nevertheless, the main aims of A&I of high quality and fast publication should be preserved regardless of the cost in terms of impact factor or rejection rate.

An additional novelty for 2015 is the substitution of the formal and classical editorial comment on a specific article with a broader and more extensive presentation of the issue, which is expected to be more practical in the context of online-only publication. The idea is to present the contents of the issue to make it easier for readers to choose those articles that might be most interesting for them. This new section is generically entitled: "In this issue of A&I".

Thus, in this issue of A&I, which as we have mentioned is quite voluminous, a very wide range of allergic and immunologic diseases is covered. The association of rhinitis and asthma is further studied in the first paper by means of both sputum eosinophil count and sputum ECP level, showing the existence of lower airway inflammation in patients with allergic rhinitis with and without asthma. Another study shows that there is a significant correlation between the nasal endoscopic score and the duration of asthma in patients with different grades of asthma.

Asthma itself is also covered in this issue of A&I with an interesting basic research paper involving a murine model that shows adalimumab (a TNF-blocking agent) to significantly reduce several asthma-related inflammatory changes in bronchi and alveoli. Furthermore, an epidemiological

study on this condition offers a prediction model capable of explaining over 98% of the asthma exacerbations in schoolchildren, just taking into account schooling and climate variables. In the field of bronchial hyperresponsiveness, another article describes how this condition behaves in antibody deficient children and demonstrates that hyperresponsiveness is greater in selective IgA deficient children. Another paper furthermore shows subcutaneous immunotherapy against airborne allergens to be a safe procedure when performed by trained personnel.

Skin diseases are also covered in the issue. An original study assesses the useful role of mean platelet volume as an inflammation marker in chronic urticaria (as has already been shown in other inflammatory diseases): a decrease in this volume may be considered an indicator of inflammation in such cases. Moreover, a basic study on mast cells concludes that selective PDE-inhibitors (such as rolapram) are not good stabilizers of human skin mast cells, since they cannot inhibit histamine release by these cells – in contrast to the effective inhibitory action afforded by non-selective PDE-inhibitors such as theophylline.

As expected, food allergy has its own representation in this issue. A paper dedicated to cow's milk allergy shows the cutoff point of specific IgE to whole milk to be a better predictor of this type of allergy as compared to specific IgE targeted to milk components such as alpha-lactoalbumin, beta-lactoglobulin or casein.

Drug allergy is also included in the table of contents of this issue of A&I. Specifically, DRESS syndrome is addressed: a series of 45 patients are included in the published paper, and a thorough description of the study sample is offered. Other diseases, such as X-linked agammaglobulinemia, eosinophilic esophagitis and rheumatoid arthritis are also the topics of three different papers in the present issue. While in the first two diseases the papers describe a relatively large number of patients, in the last paper the authors seek to relate inflammatory markers to disease activity. The study shows that high sensitivity C-reactive protein, IL-6 and IL-10 (negatively), and TNF-alpha, are correlated to the disease activity score.

This issue of A&I also contains three Reviews and several Research Letters, apart from two Letters to the Editor

discussing two previously published papers: one on the safety of skin prick tests¹, and the other on cat allergy and reactions to big cats at the circus². The first review offers a new insight to the epidemiology of food allergy, focusing on Latin America, while the second - a very short and specific paper - discusses the adverse effects of lenalidomide, an immunomodulatory drug principally approved for the treatment of multiple myeloma, myelodysplastic syndromes and amyloidosis. The third review is also quite specific, and addresses the genetics of aspirin-related asthma in Japan.

I am sure that the contents of this issue of A&E will be of interest to the professionals of the international Immunology and Allergy community.

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