

Clinician Researcher Achieves 2013 ACAAI Women in Science Award

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CINCINNATI - The Director of Clinical Services for the Division of Allergy and Immunology at Cincinnati Children's, [Amal H. Assa'ad, MD](#), was recently recognized for her steadfast service and research endeavors. The American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (ACAAI) unanimously voted for Assa'ad to receive the ACAAI Woman in Allergy Award for 2013. This prestigious award is in recognition of her dedication in advancing the specialty by her work in food allergy and science.

Allergic diseases have been on the rise over the past 20 years, with approximately one of every 13 children having food allergies and over 2.5 million children suffering from allergic asthma. For people with food allergies, their immune systems overreact to the proteins of a certain food or foods, resulting in an allergic reaction that can include symptoms such as a rash or red, itchy skin; stuffy or itchy nose, sneezing or itchy and teary eyes; or vomiting, stomach cramps or diarrhea, angioedema or swelling. Severe food allergies can sometimes result in a life-threatening reaction called anaphylaxis, which may have symptoms such as hoarseness, throat tightness or lump in the throat; wheezing, chest tightness or trouble breathing; or tingling in the hands or feet, lips or scalp.

Many foods can cause food allergies; however, the most common are cow's milk, eggs, peanuts, wheat, soy, fish, shellfish, and tree nuts (almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts, pecans). Management of food allergy typically includes elimination of the reaction-causing food from the diet, other avoidance precautions to limit exposure to the reaction-causing food and a plan of action in case of accidental exposure. More recently, exciting clinical trials have shown the value of food tolerance protocols in the treatment of food allergy.

Assa'ad is a leader in local clinical care and clinical research trials for allergic disease, with her work in food allergy being recognized with the prestigious Louisa Bousinco Lectureship and Award by the ACAAI. She is currently conducting research trials for asthma and peanut allergy.

In addition to her local efforts, Assa'ad exemplifies the national and global mission of Cincinnati Children's through her far-reaching dedication and valued efforts to improve child health. She has represented Cincinnati Children's as an invited speaker at plenary sessions and international symposia at four international meetings, in Israel, Italy, Mexico, and India, in the past year. In addition, she serves as an elected member of the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI); chaired and organized the 2012 ACAAI Food Allergy Symposium; and co-authored a recent, well-received publication in the *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology* about preventing allergic disease through nutritional interventions.

"I am honored to be selected by the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology for the Woman in Allergy award," says Assa'ad. "I hope that this award and recognition will allow me to become a mentor and a role model for women in Allergy and Immunology, especially at a time when the number of women has surpassed that of men in applying to and in joining the specialty. While I love and practice all aspects of Allergy and Immunology, my heart lies in advancing our knowledge about food allergy and improving the lives of those affected with it. As the number of patients with food allergy rises and the complexity of the disorder increases, I hope that we will accomplish these goals with the knowledge, the innovation and the determination of our and future generations of allergists and immunologist, both women and men."

About Cincinnati Children's

Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center ranks third in the nation among all Honor Roll hospitals in U.S. News and World Report's 2013 Best Children's Hospitals ranking. It is ranked #1 for cancer and in the top 10 for nine of 10 pediatric specialties. Cincinnati Children's is one of the top two recipients of pediatric research grants from the National Institutes of Health and a research and teaching affiliate of the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. The medical center is internationally recognized for improving child health and transforming delivery of care through fully integrated, globally recognized research, education and innovation. Additional information can be found at www.cincinnatichildrens.org. Connect on the [Cincinnati Children's blog](#), via [Facebook](#) and on [Twitter](#).

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Allergy and Immunology Clinical Research Trials

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