



Asia Pacific Association of Allergy, Asthma and Clinical Immunology

APAAACI Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Committee

Chair: Prof Mimi Tang

Food allergy has always been thought to preferentially affect developed countries but there is growing evidence that the prevalence of food allergy is also increasing in developing countries and this poses a serious and possibly under-recognized public health burden globally. To understand the true extent of the problem, studies using standardized methodologies and objective methods of assessment are required to accurately determine food allergy prevalence. Although the quality of existing data is limited by inconsistent definitions and lack of oral food challenges to confirm diagnosis, it appears that changing time trends and geographical variations do exist, reflecting the complex interaction of modifiable and non-modifiable early life risk factors. Compounding the problem is the absence of an effective cure, with allergen avoidance and timely treatment of allergic reactions still the mainstay of food allergy management. Intense research in the area of food allergen immunotherapy as a means to induce tolerance has shown that oral immunotherapy, despite being effective at inducing desensitization, has limited ability to induce tolerance and is often associated with adverse reactions. If we are to succeed in reducing the burden of food allergy globally, effective prevention strategies to reduce disease incidence and a safer curative treatment to hasten disease resolution are required.

Objectives, Projects, Resources and Timeline/Deadlines.

The objective of this committee is to facilitate collaboration amongst food allergy clinicians and researchers across the Asia Pacific Region and to advance understanding of food allergy prevention, diagnosis and management. Specific projects we will focus on in the next 2 years re to gather data on prevalence of food allergies and anaphylaxis and to develop consensus on treatment strategies in the Asia Pacific. These specific projects are expected to stimulate further research into food allergy and improve patient outcomes.

Bio

Professor Tang is a Paediatric immunologist allergist at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, Australia, Group Leader of Allergy Immunology Research at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute and a Professor in the Department of Paediatrics at the University of Melbourne.

Professor Tang is internationally recognized in the field of allergy and immunology. Her research programme is focused on developing a novel combination therapy for food allergies that harnesses the potent immune modulating capacity of intestinal microbiota alongside allergen oral immunotherapy to induce disease remission. If successful this exciting treatment approach will transform the way food allergies are managed, leaving behind allergen avoidance and allowing



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patients to eat their allergen freely.

Professor Tang has received national and international awards recognising her achievements in allergy immunology research and clinical care and is regularly invited to speak at major international scientific meetings in the field. She is a Board Director of the World Allergy Organisation and sits on various expert committees of the American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology, World Allergy Organisation and the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy.