

## *The impact of allergic disease*

### *Affecting people*

- ⇒ 300 million people worldwide suffer from asthma. (WHO Fact Sheet No 307, Aug 2006)
- ⇒ 8.3% of the Canadian population, aged 12 and over, has asthma. (Canadian Community Health Survey, 2005)
- ⇒ 11.7% of Canadian children, aged 12-19, have asthma. This number has quadrupled in the past 20 years. (Child Health and the Environment: A primer, 2005)
- ⇒ 255,000 people worldwide died of asthma in 2005. (WHO Fact Sheet No 307, Aug 2006)
- ⇒ 1.5% of Canadian school-aged children have peanut allergy, and this percentage is on the rise. (AllerGen researcher Ann Clarke, 2000-2002, 2005-2007)
- ⇒ There is a critical shortage of allergic and immune disease specialists – 1 per 247,863 Canadians. 129 allergy and immune disease specialists were practicing in Canada in 2004, compared with 998 in cardiology, 606 in neurology and 317 in rheumatology. (Canadian Institute for Health Information, Supply, Distribution and Migration of Canadian Physicians, 2004)
- ⇒ Only 10% of asthma patients receive a personalized self-management plan to help them control their symptoms. (The Prevention and Management of Asthma in Canada. The National Asthma Control Task Force, 2000)

### *Affecting the economy*

- ⇒ The direct and indirect cost of asthma to the Canadian economy annually is estimated at \$504 million to \$648 million (1990 dollars), which represents \$688 million to \$884 million in 2006 dollars. (Direct and Indirect Costs of Asthma in Canada, 1990)
- ⇒ The average number of productivity loss days for a Canadian asthmatic employed full-time is 12 annually. Canadian homemakers lose 22 days per year, while students lose 20 days per year. (AllerGen researcher Wendy Ungar, 2000)
- ⇒ Asthma-related productivity loss is estimated to cost the Canadian economy \$143 million (1990 dollars) annually, which represents \$195 million in 2006 dollars. (Direct and Indirect Costs of Asthma in Canada, 1990)

### *Affecting the health care system*

- ⇒ The direct cost of asthma to the Canadian health care system annually is estimated at \$306 million (1990 dollars), which represents \$417 million in 2006 dollars. (Direct and Indirect Costs of Asthma in Canada, 1990)
- ⇒ 25% of Canadian asthmatic children, aged 2-19, experienced symptoms continuously or often in 1996-97, with 44% of those children visiting the doctor as many as three times that year and 15% visiting four or more times. (The Prevention and Management of Asthma in Canada. The National Asthma Control Task Force, 2000)
- ⇒ Almost 27% of physician visits by Canadian asthmatic children in 1996-97 were to the Emergency Department. (The Prevention and Management of Asthma in Canada. The National Asthma Control Task Force, 2000)

### *AllerGen: Impacting Canadians in a positive way*

AllerGen NCE Inc. is a network of more than 150 investigators conducting leading-edge research in allergic and related immune disease. Representatives from allergy, immunology, genetics and genomics, epidemiology, toxicology, biochemistry, biotherapeutics, environmental sciences, psychosocial health, occupational and workplace health, public policy, economics, ethics, business and commerce are united in basic and applied research directed towards solving complex problems surrounding allergic disease. By studying the causes and progression of allergic disease, AllerGen research will contribute to strategies to ease the suffering of those already afflicted, and potentially prevent children from developing this chronic disease.