

# Allergies in Europe and worldwide – Facts & Figures



## What is allergy?

An allergy is a misdirected immune response to substances that are actually harmless. The consequences: chronic or recurring inflammation of the respiratory tract, skin, or intestines, sometimes leading to severe anaphylactic reactions.

## Allergies are on the rise worldwide

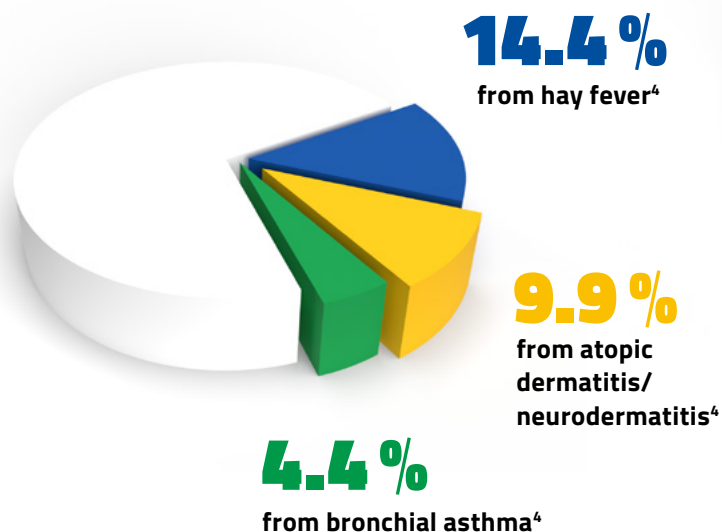
In recent decades, allergic diseases have increased significantly worldwide. In Europe alone, over 128 million people are affected by allergies.<sup>1</sup>

Why more and more people are developing allergies is a matter of controversial debate in research. There is as yet no conclusive explanation for this. Possible reasons for the rise in allergies are the spread of the so-called Western lifestyle with its high hygiene standards, air pollution and epigenetic factors, as well as climate change.<sup>2,3</sup>

## The most common allergies

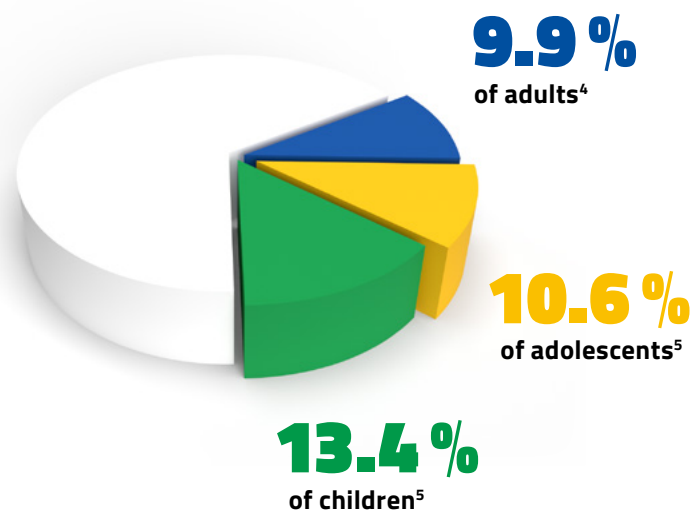
The most common allergies worldwide include hay fever (allergic rhinitis), atopic dermatitis/neurodermatitis and bronchial asthma.

**Of all adults worldwide, suffer in the course of their lives:**



## Atopic dermatitis/neurodermatitis

**Worldwide, affected by atopic dermatitis/neurodermatitis, in the course of their lives, are:**



In the European Union, 4.4 percent of adults suffer from atopic dermatitis/neurodermatitis.<sup>6</sup>

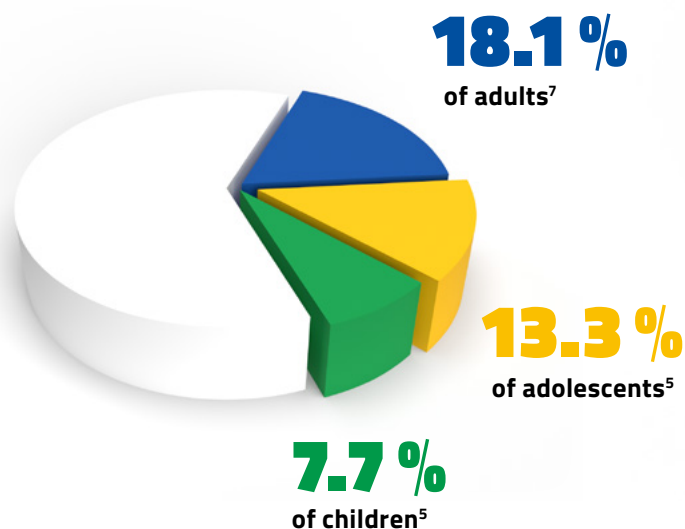


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## Hay fever

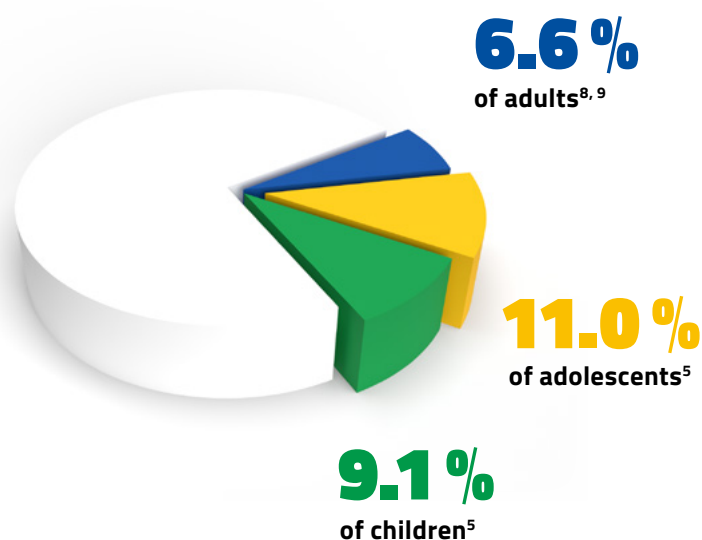
Worldwide, hay fever affects:



If hay fever is not treated or is treated incorrectly, there is a risk of a so-called stage change – the affected person also develops allergic bronchial asthma.

## Asthma

Worldwide, bronchial asthma affects:



In 2019, bronchial asthma affected around 262 million people globally.<sup>10</sup>

## Risks and economic impacts

If allergy sufferers are not treated or are treated incorrectly, this has a massive economic impact. In Europe, 84 billion euros could be saved annually if allergies were treated correctly.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Traidl-Hoffmann, C. Allergology. In: Hoffmann C. et al. Planetary Health. Climate, Environment and Health in the Anthropocene 1st edition (2021), MWV Medical Scientific Publishing Company; 52–9

<sup>2</sup> Klimek, L. et al. White Paper on Allergy in Germany. 4th revised and extended edition 2019, Springer Medizin Verlag GmbH

<sup>3</sup> Luschkova, D. et al. Climate change and allergies. Allergo Journal International 2022; 31(4): 114–120

<sup>4</sup> Mortimer, K. et al. The burden of asthma, hay fever and eczema in adults in 17 countries: GAN Phase I study. European Respiratory Journal 2022; 60: 2102865

<sup>5</sup> García-Marcos, L. et al. The burden of asthma, hay fever and eczema in children in 25 countries: GAN Phase I study. European Respiratory Journal 2022; 60: 2102866

<sup>6</sup> Barbarot, S. et al. Epidemiology of atopic dermatitis in adults: Results from an international survey. Allergy 2018; 73(6): 1284–1293

<sup>7</sup> Savouré, M. et al. Worldwide prevalence of rhinitis in adults: A review of definitions and temporal evolution. Clinical and Translational Allergy 2022; 12(3): e12130

<sup>8</sup> Total current prevalence of asthma symptoms

<sup>9</sup> The Global Asthma Report. The International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease 2022; 26: 1–102

<sup>10</sup> Global burden of 369 diseases and injuries in 204 countries and territories, 1990–2019: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2019. Lancet. 2020; 396(10258): 1204–1222

<sup>11</sup> Zuberbier, T. et al. Economic burden of inadequate management of allergic diseases in the European Union: a GA<sup>2</sup>LEN review. Allergy 2014; 69(10): 1275–9