U-BIOPRED call for volunteers to help advance severe asthma treatment

Understanding severe asthma

U-BIOPRED aims to bring about a better understanding of the different types of severe asthma, in order to develop better treatments. Unlike other forms of the condition, the majority of people living with severe asthma are unable to manage their symptoms with existing medication. Millions of people in Europe suffer from serious, uncontrolled asthma symptoms, which results in death for thousands of people every year.

What is U-BIOPRED?

U-BIOPRED (Unbiased BIOmarkers in PREDiction of respiratory disease outcomes) is a research project to understand more about severe asthma, involving scientists from universities, research institutes, the pharmaceutical industry and small companies.

U-BIOPRED is funded by the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI), which has established a funding partnership between the pharmaceutical industry in Europe and the European Commission. By bringing together all relevant groups, it is believed that significant steps can be taken to overcome barriers and to identify new treatments. U-BIOPRED is made up of several elements, including laboratory research, animal research and a clinical trial.

Clinical trial aims

The aim of the clinical trial is to track people’s disease experiences and responses to treatment over time. This will help align treatment responses to specific conditions and help get a much clearer idea of what severe asthma is, how it differs from person to person and uncover new information and ideas that could lead to the creation of effective new treatments.

Help us to advance asthma treatment

U-BIOPRED needs both adult and child volunteers under the following criteria to participate:

- Those with severe asthma, who are on a high dose of inhaled corticosteroids and/or oral corticosteroids. Adult smokers and nonsmokers are also needed.
For the control group we are looking for:

- Adults with mild-to-moderate asthma who are non-smokers
- Adults without asthma who are non-smokers

**What is involved?**

The research will involve an initial visit to assess:

- Current health status
- Evidence of allergy
- Lung function
- Level of inflammation
- Genetic make up

All participants will be offered the opportunity to attend optional additional visits to have their airways examined in more detail (with techniques known as bronchoscopy and nasal biopsy). Participants with severe asthma will be followed up with two further visits, and those with worsening symptoms may require an additional visit, to repeat some of the tests carried out at the start of the study.

The research will be organised by each individual centre* and will involve patient visits to clinical sites and home monitoring. The main research period will be arranged per volunteer and will last 3–6 months, including two to three follow up visits to the centre, dependent on the nature of the volunteer’s condition. Additional visits may be requested for severe asthma volunteers, according to the volunteer’s condition.

**Our obligations**

All volunteers will be kept informed about the results and progress of the project. We will ensure that volunteers know exactly what is required. Any personal data collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, with respect to data protection regulations. The project and the clinical trials therein have been approved by the ethics committees at all levels within the project partnership. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

**What happens next?**

Volunteers will have an opportunity to find out more about the study through telephone contact. If both parties are happy to proceed, volunteers will be asked to read and sign a consent form and will then be invited for a screening visit. To take part in the study, please contact your nearest centre by 31st December 2012.

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U-BIOPRED is an IMI funded project, receiving the support of the EU and EFPIA

**Further information**

The European Lung Foundation (ELF) was founded by the European Respiratory Society (ERS) in 2000 with the aim of bringing together patients, the public and respiratory professionals to positively influence respiratory medicine. It is the only European foundation dedicated to all lung diseases.

The ELF is involved in dissemination arm of the U-BIOPRED project and works with patient organisations, to educate people with lung conditions and the public about the latest developments in lung health.

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More information over U-BIOPRED can be found at [www.ubiopred.european-lung-foundation.org](http://www.ubiopred.european-lung-foundation.org)

More information over IMI can be found at [http://www.imi-europe.org/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.imi-europe.org/Pages/default.aspx)