

## For immediate release

### AllerGen launches first globally-accessible allergy and asthma molecular network database

**HAMILTON, ON (30 September 2014)**

AllerGen NCE Inc., the Allergy, Genes and Environment Network (AllerGen), a national research network, is pleased to announce the launch of a unique, web-accessible database specifically geared to the study of allergy and asthma.

The [Allergy and Asthma Portal \(AAP\)](#) is the first resource of its kind and represents the most comprehensive database of the genes, proteins, biomolecular interactions and pathways associated with immunity and allergic disease.

The AAP is available for use by allergy and asthma researchers worldwide. It will improve scientists' understanding of molecular pathways and aid in the development of new therapies for allergies and asthma.

The AAP is built upon [InnateDB](#), an AllerGen-enabled database that has assembled the network of all known molecular interactions in humans and mice. The AAP incorporates over 900 additional biomolecular interactions relevant to allergy and asthma curated from both the scientific literature and AllerGen research.

Both InnateDB and the new AAP were developed with AllerGen support by Network investigator [Dr. Fiona Brinkman](#), a professor in the Department of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry at Simon Fraser University.

Dr. Brinkman is an expert in the emerging field of bioinformatics—the use of computers to gather, store, analyze and integrate vast amounts of biological information, which can then be used to study how diseases develop. Dr. Brinkman sits on the Board of Directors for Genome Canada and was among 90 Canadians recently named in Thomson Reuters' compilation of "[The World's Most Influential Scientific Minds: 2014](#)".

"The unique visualization tools available in the new allergy and asthma portal allow users to quickly see things like molecular 'hubs' in an immune response," says Dr. Brinkman. "For example, instead of simply viewing a list of proteins involved in an allergic response, researchers will see *how the proteins interact with each other*, allowing for more integrated, advanced studies of allergic diseases."

In a [2013 study](#) of the accessibility, understandability and ease of use of six major molecular pathway databases, InnateDB and the associated AAP were found to have "high inner coherence," reflecting the high quality of the data.

"AllerGen's Allergy and Asthma Portal brings the power of advanced computational techniques to bear on the complex conditions of allergies and asthma," says Dr. Judah Denburg, Scientific Director and CEO of AllerGen NCE. "This tool will help scientists to manage, analyze and interpret 'big data' in order to accelerate advances in patient care, and personalized and public health—areas of importance to Canadians and the economy."

The AAP is open to the public, with the most recently curated data available to AllerGen investigators only for a privileged period of two months prior to full release.

## **About AllerGen NCE**

[AllerGen NCE Inc.](http://www.allergen-nce.ca), the Allergy, Genes and Environment Network (est. 2004), is a national research network dedicated to improving the quality of life of people suffering from allergic and related immune diseases. Funded by Industry Canada through the federal Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) Program, the Network is hosted at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. Visit [www.allergen-nce.ca](http://www.allergen-nce.ca) for more information.

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