

SAND abstract No. 1 from the BEACH program 1999–2000

Subject: Allergic rhinitis

Organisation supporting this study: AstraZeneca

Issues: Point prevalence allergic rhinitis; current treatment; previous treatment.

Sample: 4,077 encounters from 102 GPs; data collection period: 17/8/99 – 20/9/99.

Method: Detailed in the paper entitled 'SAND Method' on this web site (<http://www.fmrc.org.au/beach.htm>). GPs were asked to ascertain (either by asking the patient or from their knowledge of the patient) whether the patient currently had allergic rhinitis.

If the patient did have allergic rhinitis the GP was asked to determine if the patient was currently taking medication for the problem; if so, which medications; and what previous medications had been used and for how long, to manage their allergic rhinitis.

Summary of results

The age–sex distribution of the respondents was similar to that of the total BEACH sample. The majority of the respondents were females (57.5%).

The point prevalence of allergic rhinitis among the survey population was 18.7% (95% CI: 16.5–20.9). The highest prevalence was among people aged 25–44 years old (24.4%) and the prevalence of allergic rhinitis was similar for males and females (17.0% and 20.0%, respectively).

Among people with allergic rhinitis, 34.4% of people were currently using medication to manage the condition. Roughly half (49.6%) of those currently taking medication used nasal corticosteroid. The most common generic medication was budesonide topical nasal, used by 30.9% of those using medication for allergic rhinitis.

Antihistamines were the most common medication previously used by people with allergic rhinitis. Of people who had previously used antihistamines, 32.4% had used them for over one year.

Among people currently using nasal corticosteroids, 40.8% had previously used antihistamines and 13.1% had used no previous medication.

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