

## Foreword: Chronic Sinusitis



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Most medical textbooks do not have a chapter on chronic sinusitis. Yet this is a debilitating disease for many patients. It is one of the most poorly researched human illnesses. As a result, understanding of this illness is superficial, and the management approach is inadequate and not satisfactory to many patients. There are many issues that are unresolved. Chronic sinusitis is certainly a heterogeneous disease but how many different subtypes are there? What is the role of allergy? Why do so many patients have a negative skin test yet manifest  $T_H2$  inflammation that is rich in eosinophils? What is the role of eosinoids in polypoid growth in nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID)-intolerant versus NSAID-tolerant patients? Does IgE participate in the pathogenesis? What is the role of infection? What about fungi?

A major hindrance to advancing knowledge in chronic sinusitis is the difficulty in accessing sinus tissue or other biologic samples for research. Unless this problem is overcome, the knowledge about chronic sinusitis will remain inadequate. The immune system plays an important role in this disease but it has not been aggressively investigated compared to asthma or allergic rhinitis. Sinus CT is helpful but the readout is subjective and a quantitative approach is needed. Its high cost is a limiting factor, especially for monitoring treatment efficacy. A biomarker for the disease would be useful. Finally, some treatment approaches to chronic sinusitis have been a matter of controversy. There are a few well-controlled studies. The patient populations for these studies are not well characterized, making interpretation of the results difficult.

Dr. Wytske Fokkens and colleagues have been at the forefront of this challenging topic. She has invited an international group of experts to provide updates on the many aspects of chronic sinusitis. This is an important addition to *Immunology and Allergy Clinics of North America*.

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