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September 28, 2021

Sent Via Email

Good morning,

Ten percent (10%) of adult patients in the United States have an error on their electronic medical records that may potentially hurt their individual outcomes, makes worse a significant public threat, and increases healthcare costs to individuals, families, systems, and payers – including Medicare and Medicaid. Today is National Penicillin Allergy Day, and the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology has made an advocacy and [public health priority](#) of getting the word out about the importance of penicillin allergy testing, which can improve patient outcomes and significantly reduce healthcare expenditures. With the incredible and ongoing challenges that health care in the United States is facing due to the pandemic, it's encouraging to consider opportunities to improve care and reduce overall costs.

It was on this date in 1928 that Alexander Fleming, a young bacteriologist, discovered penicillin, forever changing healthcare by identifying an effective way to treat a wide range of infections. Unfortunately, millions of patients in the United States today believe they are allergic to penicillin. However, 90% of the patients who have a [self-reported penicillin allergy](#) in their electronic medical record can safely take penicillin [after verification testing](#).

[Click here to view a video of Dr. David Khan, President-Elect of the AAAAI, discussing penicillin allergy advances and opportunities, including developments for testing children and expanded access to testing for adults.](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) cited the importance of correctly identifying patients who are penicillin-allergic in decreasing the unnecessary use of broad-spectrum antibiotics in its 2018 update of [Antibiotic Use in the United States: Progress and Opportunities](#). The AAAAI has presented on the importance of this issue to the Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria and is an active member of the Stakeholder Forum on Antimicrobial Resistance, a coalition of more than 100 groups working to connect governmental and non-governmental activities in the fight

(more)

against antimicrobial resistance. We have recently launched a [Penicillin Allergy Center](#) to provide information and resources for healthcare providers and patients.

Verification of patient-reported penicillin allergy testing is an important means of antibiotic stewardship, improving patient outcomes, and reducing healthcare expenditures. The AAAAI looks forward to working with you to advance access to penicillin allergy testing.

For more information, please contact us at Advocacy@aaaai.org.