

Correspondence

Evidence of chestnut pollinosis in Paris

Sirs, In the article by Laurent *et al.* [1] on chestnut pollinosis in Paris, it was unclear as to which chestnut was actually studied. The two flowering chestnut trees have many names in the English language. It is essential therefore, to use Lennaeus' scientific nomenclature. The horse chestnut—*Aesculus hippocastanum* in Europe pollinates in May. This tree pollen rarely causes allergic problems, but it can do so in towns where it may be frequently activated [2]. Among Fagales pollens, the *Betulaceae* (birch tree) crossreacts with other types of Fagales (elm, hazel), and/or *Fagaceae* (oak, beech and chestnut). The latter *Castanea* spp. has been described as reaching high pollen counts in France in some years [3]. In North America, although tree aeropollen predominates, amounting to 43.6%–85.6% for all pollens captured, both the horse chestnut and buckeyes (*Aesculus*), as well as a number of native and cultivated species of the sweet chestnut (*Castanea*) are uncommon because of chestnut blight [4].

The association between birch (*Betula*) tree pollen sensitization and fresh fruit immediate allergic reactions, is now well recognized [5]. Allergy to latex is also associated with allergic reactions to a variety of fruits especially banana, avocado and chestnut [6]. It would seem that not only seasonal allergic problems due to chestnut (*Castanea*) pollen, but also allergic reactions to eating chestnuts can be related to latex allergy.

References

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A. W. FRANKLAND
Department of Allergy and
Allied Respiratory Disorders
Floor 4, Hunt's House
Guy's Hospital
London SE1 9RT
UK

G. D'AMATO
Division of Pneumology and Allergology
Ospedale 'A. Cardarelli'
80131 Napoli
Italy

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