

## Letter to the editor

# Household insects allergy

I read with great interest the paper by Dr Carlsen et al. 'Cockroach sensitivity in Norway: a previously unidentified problem?' (1) and also Dr Chapman's editorial (2) in the same issue of your journal.

In order to answer the question in Dr Carlsen's paper, in my opinion it would be interesting to know:

(1) What are the commonest household insects found in Norway?

(2) What is the mosquito species used for radioallergosorbent test (RAST) and why has the same extract not been used for the skin test?

The fact that 16.5% of the patients are sensitive to mosquito seems to indicate a cross-reactivity with house fly (*Musca domestica*) which is also a diptera.

As it is known that a pan-allergy among arthropods is very common (3–6) and related to tropomyosin (7), paramyosin, carbohydrate cross-reactive determinants (CCD) or other pan-allergens, I think that there is more likely to be a cross-reactivity with other household insect allergens such as spider, cloth mite, *Ephestia* and silverfish or others specific to Norway in the case of Dr Carlsen's study.

In Roma, with Barletta et al. (8), we have shown that silverfish (*Lepisma saccharina*) is very common and a very primitive insect and a potential allergen.

I should be very glad to have the results of their investigations in order to know whether my guess is correct.

RC Panzani, R. Ariano  
7 bis, chemin de la batterie du Roucas Blanc  
13007 Marseille  
France

## References

1. LODRUP CARLSEN KC, CARLSEN KH, BUCHMAN MS, WIKSTRORN J, MEHL R. Cockroach sensitivity in Norway: a previously unidentified problem? *Allergy* 2002;**57**:529–533.
2. CHAPMAN MD. Skin tests to insects: reliable markers of sensitization? *Allergy* 2002;**57**:467–468.
3. BALDO BA, PANZANI RC. Detection of IgE antibodies to a wide range of insect species in subjects with suspended inhalant allergies to insects. *Int Arch allergy Appl Immunol* 1988;**85**:278–287.
4. PANZANI RC. Inhalant allergy to arthropods (to the exclusion of mites) (Part 1). *Allergol Immunopathol* 1994;**22**:28–38.
5. PANZANI RC. Inhalant allergy to arthropods (to the exclusion of mites) (Part 2). *Allergol Immunopathol* 1994;**22**:167–177.
6. PANZANI RC, ARIANO R. Arthropods and invertebrates allergy (with the exclusion of rmites): the concept of panallergy *Allergy* 2001;**56** (suppl. 69):1–22.
7. MARTINEZ A, MARTINEZ J, PALACIOS R, PANZANI RC. Importance of tropomyosin in the allergy to household arthropods. Cross reactivity with other invertebrate extracts. *Allergol Immunopathol* 1997;**25**:118–126.
8. BARLETTA B, PUGGIONI EMR, AFFERNI C, BUTTERONI C, LACOVACCI P, TINGHINO R, ARIANO R, PANZANI RC, DI FELICE G, PINI C. Preparation and characterization of silverfish (*Lepisma saccharina*) Extracts and identification of allergenic components. *Int Arch Allergy Immunol* 2002;**128**:179–186.