



## PRESS RELEASE OF THE GA<sup>2</sup>LEN UCARE NETWORK

### World Urticaria Day 2021: Who cares? U care!

Berlin, 15.09.2021 (GA<sup>2</sup>LEN UCARE Network). Burning, itching, pain - more than one percent of the world's population suffers from chronic urticaria (hives) and the number is growing. Unfortunately, this disease still receives too little public attention. The GA<sup>2</sup>LEN UCARE Network, the Urticaria Network (UNEV) and the German Allergy and Asthma Association (DAAB) have therefore been initiating World Urticaria Day (UDAY) every year on 1 October since 2014. Together with their worldwide partners, the initiatives raise awareness of the disease with numerous campaigns. Under the slogan "Who cares? U care!", they call on those affected, doctors and interested parties to help shape UDAY. More information is available at [www.urticariaday.org](http://www.urticariaday.org).

The goals of the events and offers that take place worldwide within the framework of UDAY, is to bring urticaria out of its shadowy existence, to encourage those affected and those treating it to exchange ideas and to find new solutions together against the disease and its symptoms.

#### Available everywhere: Online webinars and lectures on urticaria

This year, the focus is on digital initiatives that includes the UCARE video series on urticaria and COVID-19 available on the UDAY YouTube channel ([@urticariaday](https://www.youtube.com/@urticariaday)) from the 1st of October 2021. An informative urticaria quiz has also been developed by the GA<sup>2</sup>LEN UCARE Network that will be available in several languages via the [Actionbound app](#). Furthermore, the TikTok live event „Everything you ever wanted to know about urticaria – now is the time to ask!“ will be held by urticaria specialist Professor Marcus Maurer. The event can be found under the username @letmeaskmydad on October 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:00pm CEST.

#### Taking initiative: implementing your own UDAY actions

UDAY is the place where you can start taking action. Everyone is invited to shape the day in their own way and to start their own UDAY projects, such as a self-help group, especially if they have long-lived impact. Every contribution counts and can bring about long-term changes. Initiators can publish their activities directly on the UDAY website under the category "Events" ([www.urticariaday.org](http://www.urticariaday.org)).

#### Understanding urticaria: When it burns and itches

Cold wind, a hot bath, sweaty sports – many people react to everyday situations with an itchy rash that can be accompanied by swelling. One in four people is affected by urticaria at some point in their lives. In most cases, it heals within a few weeks (acute urticaria), however, in about one percent of the world population, the symptoms last longer and the disease becomes chronic. Chronic urticaria usually breaks out between the ages of 30 and



60, but many younger people are also affected. Women are affected about twice as often as men.<sup>1</sup>

### **High level of suffering: A heavy burden in everyday life**

The sudden onset of intense redness, wheals and/or swellings on the skin considerably limits the quality of life of those affected<sup>2</sup> and has a significant impact on every day and professional activities<sup>3</sup>: Chronic urticaria can also have a negative effect on one's social life, sleep quality, concentration, and performance, as well as cause psychological suffering.<sup>4</sup>

### **Confronting the disease: Visit specialised centres**

Many sufferers unfortunately shy away from seeking medical treatment for their disease because of shame or previous treatment failures. There are however an increasing number of skin centers specialized in urticaria such as the GA<sup>2</sup>LEN Urticaria Centers of Reference and Excellence (UCARE) (available at <https://www.ga2len-ucare.com/centers.html>). There has been considerable progress in therapy and treatment of chronic urticaria, the goal is to achieve symptom-free treatment.

### **About the GA2LEN UCARE Network**

The GA<sup>2</sup>LEN Urticaria Centers of Reference and Excellence Network (GA<sup>2</sup>LEN UCARE Network) is the biggest and most active global consortium of urticariologists and urticaria centers with the common goal to improve the treatment of urticaria. The focus is on common diagnostic and treatment guidelines, research, education and training activities for physicians and patients, but also on raising public awareness of urticaria. More information is available at [www.ga2len-ucare.com](http://www.ga2len-ucare.com).

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<sup>1</sup> Weller, K. et al. (2010). Chronische Urtikaria. Prävalenz, Verlauf, Prognosefaktoren und Folgen. Der Hautarzt, 9 (61), S. 750-757.

<sup>2</sup> Maurer M, Weller K, Bindslev-Jensen C et al. Allergy 2011; 66:317-330; Staubach P, Eckhardt-Henn A, Dechene M et al. Br J Dermatol 2006; 154:294-298.

<sup>3</sup> Weller K, Balp MM, Hollis K et al. Studie ASSURE-CSU, Poster „P030“ präsentiert auf dem Jahreskongress der DDG, 29.04.-02.05.2015, Berlin; Balp MM, Jeffrey V, Jaijun T et al. Studie SOLVE-BOI, Poster präsentiert auf dem World Congress of Dermatology (WCD), 08.06.–13.06.2015, Vancouver, Kanada.

<sup>4</sup> Weller K, Balp MM, Hollis K et al. Studie ASSURE-CSU, Poster „P030“ präsentiert auf dem Jahreskongress der DDG, 29.04.-02.05.2015, Berlin.



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