

A Hundred Years of „Allergy” Clemens von Pirquet’s essay „Allergie”, published on July 24, 1906 in *Münchener Medizinische Wochenschrift*



A hundred years have elapsed since Clemens von Pirquet, the father of Allergy, published his famous essay entitled *Allergie* (1906). The essay brought the scientific results of his experimental work on sensitivity in immunized organisms, and his considerations about immunity and hypersensitivity as being either inter-related features or separate processes with immunity induced by previous treatment.

The original ideas of Clemens von Pirquet, a pediatrician, made great advancement in the Vienna University scientific life in the second half of the 19th century, while Allergy has intensively developed over the past 100 years.

In Europe, more than 40% of people have at least one allergic disease. Therefore, implementation of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention

measures is of utmost importance. The European Allergy Congress (June 10-15, 2006) proved the success of the Viennese allergology. The hypothesized explanations of the increasing rate of allergy include genetic predisposition, better diagnosis, psychosocial aspects, hygiene, therapy, lack of tolerability, etc.

In von Pirquet’s definition, a specifically decreased immune reactivity was also included, which is no longer the case today. The term “allergy” was rapidly spread and adopted at the international level. However, hypersensitivity manifesting with specific immune reactions leads to disease. Clemens von Pirquet described specifically altered immune reactivity on the basis of the clinical and experimental research in the 20th century. Allergology has assumed an interdisciplinary character in most countries as a clinical discipline dealing with physiological and pathological immune reactions.

Prof. Jasna Lipozenčić, MD, PhD