



# Women's Health Alert

## Allergy Symptoms May Disguise Something More Serious

(NAPSA)—Asthma-like symptoms, shortness of breath and chronic bronchitis can be signs of an allergy. Or they can be signs of a much more serious condition.

Lymphangioleiomyomatosis (also known as LAM) is a fatal lung disease that strikes women in the prime of their lives—usually during their childbearing years. Over time, LAM cells break down healthy lung tissue, literally creating holes in the lungs. As a result, breathing becomes a daily battle.

Though only 1,500 cases of LAM have been identified, scientists estimate that as many as 250,000 women may be going undiagnosed or misdiagnosed because of the commonality of the symptoms, which can include:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Chronic cough
- Lung collapse

Often, when respiratory problems persist, a lung X-ray is taken. Unfortunately, X-rays rarely reveal LAM. For an accurate diagnosis, a high-resolution CT scan of the chest and abdominal area is required.

In the early stages of LAM, most women can go about their daily activities with minimal discomfort. As the disease progresses, however, women with LAM may have very limited mobility, require oxygen and, as a last resort, need a lung transplant.



**In just 10 years, scientists have reported major breakthroughs in a disease that may affect as many as 250,000 women.**

But there is new hope. The LAM Foundation, a nonprofit organization providing education and support to women living with LAM, is leading research efforts to advance the understanding and treatment of LAM.

In just 10 years, LAM Foundation scientists have reported major breakthroughs, including identifying the genetic basis of the disease. These research efforts have led to dozens of studies for the disease, including the first-ever clinical treatment trial for women with LAM, currently enrolling patients.

If you or a loved one is showing symptoms of LAM, contact a physician or pulmonary specialist. To learn more about the disease and to see how you can get involved, visit [www.thelamfoundation.org](http://www.thelamfoundation.org).