



ALK symposium reveals early treatment is critical for respiratory allergic disease in children and adolescents

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- **Allergic rhinitis has a major impact on children's quality of life**
- **Children with allergic rhinitis have an increased risk of developing asthma**
- **Early treatment may prevent asthma symptoms**

In a symposium sponsored by ALK (ALKB:DC / OMX: ALK B / AKABY / AKBLF), leading researchers have outlined the impact of childhood respiratory allergies and the potential benefits of treating children early with ALK's sublingual allergy immunotherapy (SLIT) tablets.

The symposium took place as part of the Annual Congress of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) in Helsinki from 17-21 June, which drew allergy experts, healthcare policy makers and the science media from all over the world.

Allergies damage future potentials

Data presented showed that children with allergic rhinitis (AR, or hay fever) are three times more likely to underperform at school, that their participation in outdoor activities is reduced as much as fourfold, and that 40% have difficulty sleeping, which can contribute to behavioral and attention-deficit disorders as well as impacting school exam performance.

In addition, children who are allergic to house dust mites (HDM) – the most common cause of respiratory allergy – have the highest risk for asthma, upper airway inflammation, and can go on to develop more severe asthma exacerbations.

Studies show that treatment of HDM-allergic adolescent patients with ALK's ACARIZAX[®] – which recently had its approval in 12 European countries expanded to cover patients aged 12-17 with HDM-induced allergic rhinitis – can effectively decrease their allergy symptoms. ACARIZAX[®] is also the first and only SLIT-tablet to be approved for use in both allergic rhinitis and allergic asthma in adults.

Early treatment makes a difference

ALK markets a sister product to ACARIZAX[®] – GRAZAX[®] for the treatment of grass pollen allergy – and the recently completed GRAZAX[®] Asthma Prevention (GAP) trial represents the latest long-term evidence on the benefits of early allergy treatment for children.

Professor Graham Roberts, University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust, said that early treatment may be key to preventing the onset of asthma in children with AR: *"ALK's grass SLIT-tablet GRAZAX[®] showed the ability to reduce AR symptoms long-term, and to prevent the development of asthma symptoms in children with AR. When we looked closer, we saw that the age at which treatment was initiated had a distinct impact on results. In short: the earlier we treated patients with GRAZAX[®], the better the long-term benefit for their health."*

Henrik Jacobi, ALK's Executive Vice President of Research and Development commented: *"We see increasing evidence that childhood allergies play a critical role in whether patients will go on to experience a lifetime of asthma. Now we are learning that early intervention with clinically documented allergy immunotherapy treatments could be just as important. This strengthens the argument for treating allergy and asthma together, as a single respiratory disease, and as early as possible."*

ACARIZAX[®] and GRAZAX[®] – ALK's SLIT-tablets for house dust mite (HDM) and grass pollen allergies – were first launched in 2016 and 2006 respectively. While the connection between respiratory allergy and asthma is well established, ALK continues to research the benefits of allergy treatment for asthma patients. Earlier this year, evidence from the clinical development of ACARIZAX[®] underpinned the decision by the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) to add allergy immunotherapy as a treatment option in its *Global Strategy for Asthma Management and Prevention for the first time*.

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About ALK

ALK is a research-driven global pharmaceutical company focusing on allergy prevention, diagnosis and treatment. ALK is a world leader in allergy immunotherapy – a treatment of the underlying cause of allergy. The company has approximately 2,300 employees, with subsidiaries, production facilities and distributors worldwide. ALK has entered into partnership agreements with Torii, Abbott, and Seqirus to commercialise sublingual allergy immunotherapy tablets in Japan, Russia, and South-East Asia, and Australia and New Zealand, respectively. The company is headquartered in Hørsholm, Denmark, and listed on Nasdaq Copenhagen. Find more information at www.alk.net.