

Study Proves Probiotics Reduce Common Infections in Children and Lower School Absenteeism

At the European Respiratory Society Annual Congress (ERS) in Barcelona, Spain, Professor Mario Cazzola, from the University of Rome, Italy, presented the results of a randomized study showing that ProbioKid (Institut Rosell-Lallemand, Montreal, Canada) reduced infectious events by 25% in children, during the winter period, as compared to a placebo. These results also have potential implications in the management and prevention of allergic diseases such as asthma. While probiotics are regularly discussed at gastroenterology medical conferences, these studies mark their entry into the world's largest gathering of lung experts. More than 18,000 experts of the respiratory field attended the ERS congress last year.

Contact

Diane Schrenk

514.931.1526

[Email](#)

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At the European Respiratory Society Annual Congress (ERS) in Barcelona, Spain yesterday Professor Mario Cazzola, Chief of the Respiratory Clinical Pharmacology Unit at the University of Rome, Italy, presented the results of a randomized study conducted to evaluate the effects of a synbiotic preparation (ProbioKid®, Institut Rosell-Lallemand, Montreal, Canada) on the incidence of infectious episodes in children during winter. ProbioKid® is the association of three well-characterized probiotic strains and one prebiotic.



Daily supplement of ProbioKid reduces winter infections

This promising randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled pilot study, showed that ProbioKid® reduced infectious events by 25% in children, during the winter period, as compared to a placebo. This result is backed by mechanistic and pre-clinical studies that showed the ability of this particular probiotic preparation to modulate the different types of immune response (Th1 and Th2). These results also have potential implications in the management and prevention of allergic diseases such as asthma.

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The study was conducted during the winter of 2006-2007 and involved 135 healthy, school-age children who had suffered from at least three episodes of ear-nose-throat (ENT), bronchopulmonary or gastric disorder during the course of the previous winter. The study found that a three-month daily supplementation with ProbioKid® during the winter was able to significantly reduce the risks of common infections in children. Fifty percent of the children in the probiotic group did not develop any ENT, bronchopulmonary or gastric disorder during the winter vs. 32.9% of children in the placebo group. This represents a significant reduction of twenty-five percent in the relative risk of infectious disease in the ProbioKid® group compared to the placebo group. No treatment-related side-effects were reported.

Dr. Jean-Charles Kerihuel, the pediatrician who supervised the clinical study explains the design and significance of the study. "In pediatrics, it is often difficult to discriminate between infectious episodes in winter, and reducing the number of episodes which is not significant for the parents or clinicians. What is important is to prevent the first infectious event of the season. This is why the study investigators chose to look at the effect of the probiotic on the number of children who developed any infectious events during the course of the study, rather than the number of episodes. Interestingly, ProbioKid® was able to reduce the risk of any infectious event by 25% in children when compared to placebo. The significant reduction of school absenteeism in children was also a very good criteria and an important benefit for parents."

About Lallemand and Institut Rosell

Lallemand Inc. is a privately owned Canadian company specializing in the development, production and marketing of yeast and bacteria, as well as other ingredients linked to these microorganisms or their markets. Institut Rosell has been part of the Lallemand Group since 1998. Today, it constitutes Lallemand's Human Health and Nutrition Division and is dedicated to the selection, development, production and marketing of probiotic formulations for the food and pharmaceutical industries. With extensive experience in the culturing and production of live microorganisms since 1932, Institut Rosell conducts advanced research programs aimed at better understanding the properties, functions and beneficial effects of these probiotic formulations on health.

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