



MEETING ABSTRACT

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# The effect of the ragweed sublingual immunotherapy tablet MK-3641 on rescue medication use

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## Background

Allergic rhinitis with/without conjunctivitis (AR/C) sufferers often rely on pharmacotherapy to relieve symptoms. Although the main goal of immunotherapy is long-term disease modification, reducing or eliminating the need for pharmacotherapy is also an important and desirable treatment goal.

## Methods

Data were pooled from two trials that evaluated the efficacy and safety of short-ragweed sublingual immunotherapy tablet (SLIT-T), MK-3641 (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*; Merck/ALK-Abelló). Subjects with ragweed-pollen-induced AR/C were randomized ~16 weeks before the 2010 pollen season to once-daily MK-3641 (6 or 12 Amb a 1-U doses; one trial also included a no-effect dose of 1.5 Amb a 1-U) or placebo. During the trial, all subjects, whether taking MK-3641 or placebo, could use AR/C rescue medication, including oral/ocular antihistamines and intranasal/oral corticosteroids. We examined rescue medication use in all groups.

## Results

In pooled results from the two studies, 159 of 318 (50.0%) subjects receiving MK-3641 12 Amb a 1-U and 144 of 324 (44.4%) subjects receiving 6 Amb a 1-U used no rescue medication over the entire ragweed season, compared with 109 of 340 (32.1%) subjects receiving placebo. These differences represented 56% and 38% improvements over placebo. Similarly, during the peak ragweed season 173 of 311 (55.6%) subjects and 161 of 317 (50.8%) subjects in the 12 Amb a 1-U and 6 Amb 1-U groups, respectively, reported no rescue medication use, in contrast to 136 of

333 (40.8%) subjects receiving placebo. Fewer subjects taking 12 and 6 Amb a 1-U (28% and 19%, respectively) used oral antihistamine than those taking placebo; 35% and 28% fewer subjects used ocular antihistamine; and 43% and 27% fewer subjects used intranasal corticosteroid (oral corticosteroid was used by <5 subjects in any group, so rates were not calculated).

## Conclusions

Compared with placebo, the SLIT-T treatment MK-3641 reduced rescue-medication use among subjects with ragweed-pollen-induced AR/C.

## Trial registration

ClinicalTrials.gov Identifiers: NCT00783198; NCT00770315.

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