

# Immunogenic Yeast-Based Fermentation Product Reduces Allergic Rhinitis-Induced Nasal Congestion: a Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Trial

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Received: June 17, 2009 / Published online: August 12, 2009 / Printed: September 10, 2009  
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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Allergic rhinitis (AR) impacts around 25% of the worldwide population. However, cost, safety, and a high dissatisfaction rate with numerous conventional medications continues to be an issue in the largest patient surveys, due primarily to a lack of efficacy on nasal congestion. Our previously published

randomized trial demonstrated a significant reduction in cold and flu-like symptoms, and a secondary potential observation of a decrease in nasal congestion with an oral yeast-derived compound; therefore, the objective of this study was to test the effects of this same product on nasal congestion and other notable AR symptoms. **Methods:** A 12-week, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial of 96 healthy subjects with a recent clinically documented history of seasonal allergies and AR was conducted. Participants received once-daily supplementation with 500 mg of a dried, modified *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* oral fermentation product (EpiCor®, Embria Health Sciences, Ankeny, Iowa, USA) or placebo during the 12-week period of the highest recorded concentrations of total pollen counts for this Midwest geographic area. Clinical outcome measurements included in-clinic examinations, validated questionnaire and standard diary, and serologic analysis at baseline, 6 and 12 weeks. **Results:** During the highest pollen count period (weeks 1-6), EpiCor significantly reduced the mean severity of specific AR symptoms, including a significant reduction in nasal congestion ( $P=0.04$ ), rhinorrhea ( $P=0.005$ ), and a nonsignificant reduction in ocular discharge symptoms.

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