

## **Azelastine - the active drug in anti-allergy nasal sprays demonstrated to have potent anti-viral effect on the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2**

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CEBINA GmbH, Central European Biotech Incubator and Accelerator with its partner URSAPHARM Arzneimittel GmbH, today announce new results demonstrating that azelastine, the active drug in Pollival<sup>®</sup>, URSAPHARM's widely available anti-allergy nasal spray, is an effective anti-viral against the globally dominant omicron SARS-CoV-2 variant in laboratory conditions. Previously, CEBINA and URSAPHARM have demonstrated that azelastine has potent inhibitory activity against all significant SARS-CoV-2 variants (alpha, beta, delta) in in vitro infection models using isolated virus strains and have demonstrated in a Phase II efficacy indicator clinical trial that azelastine 0.1% (Pollival<sup>®</sup>) was effective in reducing the viral load in the nasal cavity of SARS-CoV-2 positive patients by over 80% after 3 days of treatment and led to a reduction in symptoms<sup>1</sup>.

Over the last month, the SARS-CoV-2 omicron variant has spread throughout the world, rapidly dominating other strains and showing signs that SARS-CoV-2 may soon become endemic, similar to seasonal coronaviruses. As countries struggle with exploding numbers of infections while in some areas reducing preventative measurements and lockdowns, it is vitally important that disease severity is limited through vaccination and other anti-viral strategies to protect populations. "As a potent anti-viral agent, demonstrated not only against SARS-CoV-2 and its variants but also against other viruses including influenza and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) in laboratory conditions, we believe that azelastine has the potential to be a long-term solution to combat viral infections, including COVID, in the early phase when the virus is mainly in the nose" commented Eszter Nagy, MD, PhD, CEO CSO and founder of CEBINA GmbH. "In addition to vaccinations, azelastine containing nasal sprays, such as Pollival<sup>®</sup> are readily available and easy to use whenever viral infections spread and have the potential to reduce the viral load in the nose, reduce the severity of symptoms and overall reduce the duration of infection."

URSAPHARM and CEBINA are currently entering in a multi-national Phase 3 clinical study testing the efficacy of Pollival<sup>®</sup> in SARS-CoV-2 positive patients.

### **ABOUT CEBINA:**

CEBINA GmbH – Central European Biotech Incubator and Accelerator ([www.cebina.eu](http://www.cebina.eu)) is an Austria-based company committed to advancing entrepreneurship through creating and nurturing early-stage life science projects and companies to develop new medicines and cutting-edge technologies. CEBINA actively identifies academic projects with product development potential to create new companies.

CEBINA is also pursuing its own research & development projects, in particular in the infectious diseases area and has initiated multiple R&D projects to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. CEBINA also offers office and laboratory facilities, in-house research, development, financing and management capabilities to early and medium stage biotech companies.

<sup>1</sup>Jens Peter Klussmann, Clara Lehmann and Maria Grosheva *et al.* COVID-19: Azelastine nasal spray Reduces Virus-load In Nasal swabs (CARVIN). Early intervention with azelastine nasal sprays reduces viral load in SARS-CoV-2 infected patients. First report on a double-blind placebo-controlled phase II clinical trial. [DOI: 10.21203/rs.3.rs-864566/v1](https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-864566/v1)

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