

A controlled clinical trial to determine the potential of a prebiotic to beneficially influence the gut bacteria and immune defences of hospitalised elderly patients

Submission date 27/11/2008	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 11/12/2008	Overall study status Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 03/05/2016	Condition category Digestive System	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data <input type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Not provided at time of registration

Contact information

Type(s)

Scientific

Contact name

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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number

N/A

Study information

Scientific Title

A double blind, placebo controlled, randomised, single-centred, parallel group study to determine the potential of a prebiotic to beneficially influence the colonic microflora and immune status of hospitalised elderly patients

Study objectives

The metabolic activity of the gastrointestinal environment outstrips that of the liver. This is due to the presence of microorganisms and their continuous interaction with their environment (including other bacteria, gut epithelium, mucosal immune system, central nervous system and the endocrine system). Recent data suggests that intestinal microflora, after 2 years of age, remains relatively constant over time. However, it has been noted that elderly people harbour lower levels of bifidobacteria which may compromise gut health. These changes may be explained in part by the alterations occurring within the body with ageing, such as reduction of gastric, biliary and pancreatic secretions, increased intestinal mucosal permeability, impaired intestinal mobility and immunological changes. Research over the past two decades has provided evidence that administration of probiotics and/or prebiotics could be used to help optimise gut microflora composition, as well as enhance immune function.

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

Southampton and South West Hampshire Research Ethics Committee, September 2008, ref: 08/H0504/127

Study design

Interventional double-blind randomised stratified parallel-design trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Treatment

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Gut microflora composition and immune function

Interventions

Patients are randomised to one of two groups (prebiotic/placebo). Patient will be supplemented with the treatment (dosage 5.5 g per day in powder format that can be dissolved in water or juice) for the duration of their hospitalisation and another 7 days after their release from the hospital. On day 1 patient numbers will be assigned and stratified according to reason for hospitalisation. Randomisation table to be obtained from the internet. The total duration of follow up is 2 weeks.

Intervention Type

Supplement

Primary outcome(s)

To determine the effect of B-GOS on the faecal microflora of hospitalised elderly individuals, using the combination of 5'CY3-labelled 16S-ribosomal RNA oligonucleotide probes and

epifluorescent microscopy known as Fluorescent In Situ Hybridisation (FISH). The main groups to be enumerated by this method will be: bifidobacteria, lactobacilli, clostridia, eubacteria, bacteroides and E. coli.

Assessed at the beginning and end of hospitalisation.

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. To investigate the effect of B-GOS on immunity, as a result of the improvement of the microflora composition, using routine immunological tests as well as cytokine analyses and phagocytosis, analysed in blood samples at the beginning and end of hospitalisation
2. To conduct a daily assessment of stool frequency, stool consistency, bloating, flatulence and abdominal pain, assessed daily based on the hospital records (nurse and doctor visits)
3. To assess the effect of B-GOS on the duration of hospital stay in elderly patients, assessed daily based on the hospital records (nurse and doctor visits)
4. To assess the effect of B-GOS on the incidence and duration of gastrointestinal infections manifest thorough diarrhoea, assessed daily based on the hospital records (nurse and doctor visits)
5. To assess the tolerability and confirm the safety of B-GOS in elderly hospitalised patients, assessed daily based on the hospital records (nurse and doctor visits)

Completion date

30/07/2009

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Inpatients aged 65 or older, either sex
2. Ability to communicate well with the investigator and to comply with the requirements of the entire study
3. Patient has given written informed consent to participate and is willing to participate in the entire study
4. Patient is admitted to the hospital for a minimum of one week

Participant type(s)

Patient

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Senior

Sex

All

Key exclusion criteria

1. Patients lacking capacity who are therefore unable to consent
2. Diarrhoea on admission, within the preceding week or reported recurrent diarrhoea
3. Severe allergy or any history of severe abnormal drug reaction, drug or alcohol abuse
4. Intake of more than two courses of antibiotics in the previous four weeks

5. Former participation in another study involving prebiotic or probiotic supplements or investigational drugs within the previous 1 month, or intention to use such drugs during the course of the study
6. Undergone surgical resection of any part of the bowel
7. Currently prescribed immunosuppressive drugs including oral steroids
8. Patients with any heart valve replacement or history of rheumatic heart disease or infective endocarditis
9. Severe life threatening illness

Date of first enrolment

19/01/2009

Date of final enrolment

30/07/2009

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre

The University of Reading

Reading

United Kingdom

RG6 6AP

Sponsor information

Organisation

Clasado Ltd (UK)

ROR

<https://ror.org/04e5xac72>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Industry

Funder Name

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary
Not provided at time of registration

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes