

Concluding remarks

- The AIDA survey revealed that, when choosing SLIT products, Italian specialists considered the following aspects very important: the level of EBM validation of efficacy and safety, the standardization of the product, the efficacy of the product based on personal experience, and the defined content(s) of the major allergen(s) in micrograms. Hence, the main aspect influencing the specialists' choice is the quality of the allergen extract: specialists choose and use high-quality allergen products in real-life practice.
- Both allergy diagnosis and aerobiology are moving towards a "molecular era", which allows allergy specialists to view the issues surrounding diagnosis and exposure to allergens from a molecular point of view.
- Although pollen count has been used for over 50 years for the assessment of allergen exposure, the measurement of the allergen content in the pollen, the so-called "pollen potency", could be considered more representative of allergen exposure. For the first time, the concepts of molecular aerobiology and allergology have been applied here to draw an Italian molecular map of exposure to airborne allergens. It strongly contributes to the application of molecular reasoning in daily clinical practice and is especially important in the choice of the appropriate AIT.
- Patient IgE reactivity profiles can be more comprehensively evaluated by means of a molecule-based diagnostic approach, in order to distinguish genuine from panallergen molecules. Concurrently, more detailed knowledge of AIT products by means of a molecular evaluation (an accurate description of molecules present or absent in each commercial product, and their amounts), can allow greater correlation between diagnostic findings and immunotherapeutic intervention, thus allowing the right prescription for the right patient.
- Relevant allergens are major contributors to the safety and efficacy of allergenic extracts used in AIT. These should be accurately quantified, as recommended by the 2008 European guidelines on allergen products. The assays have evolved over time, from antibody-based methods to current approaches based on mass spectrometry. These techniques, which are now applied by Stallergenes all along the production process, constitute a pivotal and advanced step for the pharmaceutical characterization of the finished AIT products, which are therefore considered as new and innovative drugs.

