

# Hormone therapy helps short children grow up

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Growth hormone treatment may significantly increase final height in children diagnosed with short stature, even in cases where the child is not growth hormone deficient, according to a new study accepted for publication in The Endocrine Society's *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism (JCEM)*.

Growth hormone (GH) has been shown to be effective in treating GH deficient children with short stature, but its effect on non GH deficient children with short stature has remained unclear.

"In our study, dose dependent GH treatment increased final height in children with short stature who are not GH deficient with a mean gain of more than three inches, with some cases seeing a gain of nearly eight inches," said Kestin Albertsson-Wikland, M.D., Ph.D., professor at the Goteborg Pediatric Growth Research Center at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, and lead author of the study.

In this study, researchers evaluated the effects of growth hormone treatment on 150 short children over a period of 20 years. These children were randomized to no treatment, low GH dosage, or high GH dosage.

While there have been other studies to evaluate the effect of GH treatment in children with short stature, this study provides more conclusive results as it is the only randomized, controlled study using two different doses of daily GH in prepubertal children who were followed to final height, said Dr. Alberstsson-Wikland.

"There are many variables known to affect the growth response to GH treatment, such as birth length and early growth during the first years of life," said Dr. Albertsson-Wikland. "Our study also found that children from parents of normal height respond better to treatment than those from short parents."

Future studies will address how to individualize the GH dose according to a child's responsiveness, said Dr. Albertsson-Wikland.

Source: The Endocrine Society

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