

Grazax® hay fever treatment

This leaflet is to be read in conjunction with the manufacturers leaflet for Grazax®. A copy of the manufacturer's leaflet will be provided with your supply of Grazax®. Copies are also available from www.emc.medicines.org.uk.

This leaflet aims to answer some additional questions you may have about taking Grazax® tablets to treat your hay fever allergy. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is Grazax® and what is it used for?

Grazax® is a hay fever treatment used to reduce allergic reactions to grass pollen. You may have been recommended this treatment:

- If you have a severe allergy to grass pollen
- If your medication does not control your symptoms very well.

A substance called an allergen causes allergic reactions. Almost anything can be an allergen, including pollen, animals, food and medicine. Grazax® contains a grass pollen allergen. It can cause allergies such as rhinitis and conjunctivitis.

How do I take Grazax®?

When you take a Grazax® tablet you take a small dose of this allergen. By taking many small doses you are able to build up a tolerance to grass pollen. This reduces the symptoms of your allergic reaction.

Grazax® comes as a soft light tablet. It is to be taken once a day. The tablet should be taken out of its original pack with dry fingers, and placed under the tongue, where it will dissolve. It should be kept under the tongue for one to two minutes and subsequently swallowed.

You should avoid eating or drinking for at least five minutes after taking Grazax® to ensure the drug is completely dissolved. Further information on how to take Grazax® tablets will be given to you when you are seen in clinic.

What should I do if I forget to take Grazax®?

If you forget to take Grazax® for one day, you should take the dose as soon as you remember. If the treatment was interrupted for more than one day, then you should inform your clinic as soon as you can and they will be able to advise on what to do next.

What happens when I start treatment?

An allergy specialist is the only person who can start your Grazax® treatment. He or she will give you your first dose and then monitor any side-effects before deciding whether it is appropriate for you to continue with the treatment. This will take 30-60 minutes.

Treatment needs to be started before the grass pollen season begins. Therefore, you will receive an invite in September to start Grazax® treatment in January.

At your first appointment you will be given a six month supply of Grazax® tablets. The allergy specialist will then give you a review date five to six months after starting Grazax® treatment (at the end of the pollen season). At this appointment, the allergy specialist will use a quality of life questionnaire to assess the progress of your treatment and let you know if the treatment needs to continue. If response to treatment seems positive at the five-six month review appointment, a further six month supply of Grazax® tablets will be given.

If Grazax® is improving your symptoms you will continue taking it for three years. If your symptoms do not improve at the end of the pollen season, your specialist may stop the treatment.

Are there any side effects?

Since you will be taking a grass pollen allergen you will experience a form of your normal allergy symptoms. For example, you may get a runny nose or watery eyes. However, these symptoms usually start immediately after you start the tablets and gradually get less the longer you take the tablets.

Please refer to the manufacturer's leaflet for more information on side effects. Please note - as stated in the manufacturer's leaflet - that you should contact your GP immediately if you experience severe reactions.

Can I take other medicines while I am taking Grazax®?

Yes, you can take most other medicines including your usual treatment for hay fever and asthma. Please let us know about any medicines you currently take, including those prescribed for you and any you buy over the counter, including vitamins, supplements and herbal/alternative medicines. We will check through them to make sure that they are suitable to be taken with Grazax®.

Please discuss any new medicines with your doctor before starting them and always tell any other doctor treating you that you are on Grazax®.

Can I have vaccinations and other medical procedures?

You can take Grazax® on the day of your vaccination if you are medically fit and well. You should inform your physician that you are taking Grazax® therapy before you have any medical or dental procedures. In case of oral surgery, including dental extraction, or for young children who lose their milk teeth, treatment with Grazax® should be stopped for seven days to allow healing of the oral cavity. You should always contact your clinic for advice on stopping and re-starting treatment.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding advice

It is not known how Grazax® affects an unborn baby due to limited data on its use during pregnancy. It is therefore not recommended that women should be taking it during pregnancy.

If pregnancy occurs during your treatment with Grazax®, the therapy may be continued on an individual case basis. The physician will need to assess the general condition of the pregnant

woman and whether the treatment had been previously well tolerated. Please contact your physician if you become pregnant or think that you have become pregnant during treatment.

There is no information available on whether Grazax® is found in breast milk or not. It is therefore not recommended to commence treatment whilst breastfeeding. Please speak to your physician for further advice.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about drug allergy challenge testing, please contact the **Allergy Nurse Specialist** on **020 7188 5830** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) for advice at least five working days before your appointment.

Out of hours, please leave your name and telephone contact number and a member of staff will call you back in working hours; alternatively please contact your GP or NHS 111.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and Accessible Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch:

t: 020 7188 8815 **e:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

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