

# Grazax<sup>®</sup> Sublingual Immunotherapy Treatment (SLIT)

Information for patients



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## What is Grazax®?

Grazax® is a sublingual (under the tongue) once daily immunotherapy treatment that is used in children and adults who have severe allergies to grass pollen (Timothy grass). Grazax may also reduce symptoms caused by other grass pollens. It comes in the form of a tablet that dissolves under the tongue. Taken daily, Grazax® can help the immune system develop a tolerance to grass pollen.

**Grazax® is taken daily for three years.** If the treatment is to be successful and have long-term benefits, it is extremely important that Grazax® is taken every day during the entire treatment period, unless there are troublesome side effects or the person taking Grazax® is unwell.

## When do I start Grazax®?

The first dose of the immunotherapy will be administered in the Children's Day Unit. You will be sent details of the date, time and place. You/your child will need to stay for approximately one hour after the first dose. During this time, your child will be monitored closely for any symptoms or signs of an unwanted allergic reaction. After this initial visit, your child will continue to take the treatment at home every day.

## How do I take Grazax®?

You take Grazax® by placing the tablet under your tongue. The tablet needs to be held under the tongue for one minute without swallowing. No food or drink is permitted for 5 minutes after taking the Grazax® tablet.

If you are taking any other sublingual immunotherapy medications (e.g. Oralvac Compact®) - We recommend to leave at least **ONE HOUR** between different sublingual medications.

### Important Points

- Do not exercise for 1 hour before or after taking Grazax®
- Ensure the mouth is clear of food, rinse mouth if necessary
- Remind/remember to hold the tablet under the tongue for 1 minute without swallowing. Do NOT chew or swallow the tablet
- Do not eat or drink anything for 5 minutes after the Grazax® tablet
- Take Grazax® at the same time every day, ideally in the morning.
- Never take more than 1 Grazax® tablet per day
- Grazax® is taken daily for three years.

### When shouldn't Grazax® be taken?

Grazax® works by stimulating and altering your immune system through the immune cells found in the lining of your mouth. Grazax® should be missed on days when the person taking Grazax® is unwell (as the immune system is already in 'overdrive') or if the mouth is tender, cut or inflamed.

**Grazax® daily treatment should be temporarily stopped if any of the following occur:**

1. Asthma attack
2. Infection/viral illness
3. High temperature
4. Any injury or sores in the mouth (for example - cold sores, tooth removal/loss, trauma to mouth during sports injury).
5. On the day a vaccination is given and whilst experiencing the side effects of a vaccination

### How should Grazax® be restarted after a break or a missed dose?

- Grazax® should be restarted once the acute phase of the illness/infection has passed.
- Grazax® should be restarted after wounds in the mouth have healed or 7 days after tooth extraction.
- If a dose is accidentally missed/forgotten - DO NOT take a double dose. Resume with the usual daily dose.

If your child's Grazax® tablets are stopped for **3 days or less**, please restart at home. You do not need to inform the allergy nurses.

If your child's Grazax® tablets have been stopped for **3-7 days**, please contact the allergy nurses to see if the Grazax® treatment can be resumed at home.

If your child's Grazax® treatment has been stopped for **more than 7 days**, please do **NOT** resume at home and contact the allergy nurses. We may want to restart Grazax® in the hospital.

## Should other allergy medications be stopped while taking Grazax®?

No. Initially the advice is to remain on all the same allergy medications as usual. It may take up to a year after starting Grazax® to notice an improvement in symptoms.

Over time it is anticipated that your child will be able to reduce or stop some or all of the allergy medications.

The allergy team will provide direction on how to reduce regular allergy medications at follow up clinic visits, depending on the severity of allergy symptoms.

## Can any new medications be started whilst on Grazax®?

Please discuss with a member of the allergy team before starting any new medications or having other immunotherapy treatment.

At any time during the treatment period of 3 years, please remember to inform the allergy team of any new medications your child is advised to take.

## How to store Grazax®

- Keep out of reach of children.
- Store Grazax® in a dry location at room temperature. You do not need to keep Grazax® in the refrigerator.
- Open each blister just before you take the tablet. **DO NOT** take tablets out of the blisters to store in a pillbox.

## Repeat prescription

**Please contact the GP or the Children's Allergy Nurses for a refill of the Grazax® when the last box has been opened.**

In order to avoid interruption of treatment, it is important to request the next prescription of Grazax® as soon as the last box of Grazax® has been started.

If too many doses of Grazax® have been missed during a period of time or if follow up clinic appointments are not attended, a decision may be made by the allergy team for Grazax® treatment to be discontinued.

## How long will the beneficial effect of Grazax® last?

This varies from one individual to another. In general, the effect of this treatment is expected to last for at least 5 years after initiation and up to 10 years.

## What are the possible risks of Grazax® treatment?

Sublingual immunotherapy is very safe. Large studies on hundreds of children have never found any serious reactions. The most common side effects were itchiness in the mouth or ears, or mild allergy symptoms for example a runny nose or watery eyes, throat irritation and lip swelling after taking the Grazax® tablet. These tend to happen immediately after you have administered the Grazax® tablet and usually do not last longer than then 10-15 minutes. Itch and tingling can be managed by taking an antihistamine 20-30min before taking the Grazax® tablet.

Most symptoms occur on the first few days of treatment. These symptoms usually subside once the body gets used to

the treatment, within 2-3 weeks. However, if symptoms persist or are troublesome, please contact the allergy team to discuss this.

Other rarer side effects include headaches, tiredness, abdominal pain, swelling of the tongue or lips, itchy hives on skin, eczema flare, sneezing, runny or blocked nose and watery itchy eyes. If these occur, take an antihistamine and inform a member of the allergy team.

**Important** - If your child develops begins to experience difficulty in swallowing particularly when eating food (feeling like the food is 'stuck' in their throat) or needs to wash food down with fluids, experiences heartburn or vomiting - please inform the allergy team immediately. This can be a sign of a rare complication of sublingual immunotherapy called Eosinophilic Oesophagitis.

**If any severe or worrying side effects are experienced - please do not give your child any further Grazax® tablets until you have discussed your concerns with the Children's Allergy team.**

## Contact telephone numbers

**Children's Allergy Nurse Specialists (Monday to Friday 08:00 - 17:00pm)** (0113) 392 0681 or 07789 174 342 or leedsth-tr.allergy@nhs.net

**Paediatric Consultants (Monday to Friday 09:00 - 17:00pm)**  
Dr Aida Semic-Jusufagic / Dr Hodge (0113) 392 0670 (secretary's desk)

**Out of hours:** Phone the hospital switchboard and ask for the Paediatric Medical registrar on-call

**Main hospital switchboard:** (0113) 243 2799

If any of the following symptoms occur following a Grazax® dose, please follow the treatment plan below.

Make sure antihistamine medication is always available.

## General guidance on how to manage delayed reactions:

Reaction	What to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• skin rash, swelling or redness at site of injection, if troublesome</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take 1 dose of cetirizine or other non-sedating antihistamine, as advised.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mild shortness of breath</li> <li>• mild chest tightness</li> <li>• mild cough</li> <li>• mild wheeze or whistling in chest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take 2-4 puffs of reliever (blue) inhaler, if prescribed.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mild throat irritation, itching or tightness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take 1 dose of cetirizine or other non-sedating antihistamine, as advised.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generalised skin rash or hives</li> <li>• swelling of lips, tongue, face or other location (not causing shortness of breath)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take 1 dose of cetirizine or other non-sedating antihistamine as advised. This dose can be repeated after 30 minutes if no improvement in rash or swelling.</li> </ul>

Reaction	What to do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe systemic reactions (any or all of the symptoms below):</li> <li>• severe shortness of breath</li> <li>• severe chest tightness</li> <li>• severe cough</li> <li>• severe wheeze or whistling in chest</li> <li>• severe throat tightness causing difficulty breathing or voice hoarseness</li> <li>• light-headedness, dizziness, blurred vision - suggestive of a drop in blood pressure</li> </ul>	<p><b>Call 999</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if you have already been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector, self-administer it as directed</li> <li>• take a double dose of cetirizine or other non-sedating antihistamine as advised</li> <li>• take 4-10 puffs of reliever (blue) inhaler, if prescribed</li> </ul>

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