



## GRAZAX – The New Treatment for Hay Fever sufferers

Severe hay fever may cause considerable suffering and impairment of a person's quality of life and ability to work or study, despite using the full range of conventional medical treatment available, such as antihistamines, nasal sprays and eye drops. Some people with severe symptoms are driven to take steroids by tablet or injection with the potential for severe side effects.

The use of immunotherapy (desensitisation injections) fell into decline in the UK some years ago because of a few severe reactions which occurred. **However help is now at hand for severe sufferers by means of a new treatment.** This is a sublingual vaccine, called **Grazax**, which is a once a day tablet which is dissolved under the tongue. This is known as sublingual immunotherapy or SLIT. Treatment should start **at least eight weeks before the grass pollen season** and ideally earlier - for instance in the Autumn - and should continue for three years.

Research has demonstrated the efficacy of SLIT and, importantly, has also shown it to be safe. Before starting treatment it is a requirement to confirm exactly what the patient is allergic to by doing an allergy test. This can be by doing skin prick tests where an extract of the substance, in this case grass pollen, is put onto the skin as a drop of liquid and is lightly pricked into the skin very superficially. A reaction will develop in the form of redness or a slight swelling if the person is allergic to the pollen. Alternatively a blood test can be carried out.

**Grazax** is licensed for use in patients aged over 18. Anyone with moderate to severe hay fever would be considered suitable and is advised to start the process as soon as possible, particularly if their symptoms fall within the severe category.

If you would like to book an appointment for the appropriate allergy test and discuss this treatment with one of our Doctors please call our receptionists on **020 8 861 1221**. For details of our Hay Fever treatment fees navigate to the Gravax Fees page at [www.harrowhealthcare.com/fees\\_gravax.htm](http://www.harrowhealthcare.com/fees_gravax.htm).

### **Dr Ian Chait MB ChB MRCP(UK) MRCGP D Occ Med D.Med.Ac LFHom**

Ian Chait worked for almost 20 years as an NHS GP before joining the Centre. His main medical interests are the integration of complementary and allopathic (conventional) medicine. He practices acupuncture, is a member of The British Medical Acupuncture Society and has completed a course in Homeopathy at the Royal London Homeopathic Hospital.