

Thames Valley Priorities Committees (Buckinghamshire/Milton Keynes PCTs)

**Policy Statement 49: Grazax[®] allergy vaccine for moderate to severe
Ref TVxx seasonal rhinitis (grass pollen hay fever)**

Date of Issue: April 2007

The Thames Valley Priorities Committees recommend that Grazax[®] allergy vaccine should be considered a LOW PRIORITY treatment due to lack of evidence of incremental clinical and cost effectiveness when compared to existing therapies.

Grazax[®] sublingual tablets are licensed for seasonal grass pollen-induced allergic rhinoconjunctivitis (hay fever) in adults with a positive skin prick test or IgE test to grass pollen. Treatment should be initiated at least 4 months ahead of the grass pollen season.

In the main efficacy trial, mean daily symptom scores during the pollen season were 2.4 with Grazax and 3.4 with placebo (symptom scale 0-18). In total, 68% of the active treatment group used any rescue medication including antihistamines and topical corticosteroid sprays compared with 80% of the placebo group. Grazax contains allergens to only one type of grass. There is evidence of cross-reactivity with some other grasses, although allergies to other types of pollens (e.g. tree) will not be covered.

Its product licence restricts it to initiation by physicians experienced in treating allergic conditions pending more information on long-term safety

The Committee noted that:

- No data are currently available for use beyond one pollen season.
- Vaccine is a sublingual tablet to be taken daily starting at least 4 months before the hay fever season and continued for 3 years
- Most patients (68%) still have to take antihistamine medication
- There is no experience with children, adolescence and the elderly

NOTES:

1. *Exceptional circumstances may be considered where there is evidence of significant health impairment and there is also evidence of the intervention improving health status.*
2. *This policy will be reviewed in light of new evidence or guidance from NICE.*
3. *Buckinghamshire/Milton Keynes Priorities Committee policy statements can be viewed at <http://www.mkpct.org.uk/content.asp?ContentID=548>*