



Sublingual Immunotherapy with ACARIZAX® 12 SQ-HDM for House Dust Mite Allergy

What is house dust mite sublingual immunotherapy (desensitisation)?

House dust mite allergy is caused by an abnormal immune response to house dust mite (HDM). Symptoms include itching, sneezing, runny nose, congestion, catarrh and wheezing. These can occur all year round and worsen after exposure to house dust. Sublingual Immunotherapy (SLIT) helps your immune system to tolerate exposure to HDM so that symptoms improve.

How does SLIT work?

SLIT slowly changes the way your immune system reacts to HDM. In other words, over time, your immune system learns to tolerate HDM.

Why has my doctor recommended SLIT?

Your allergy tests are positive to house dust mite and your allergy symptoms in the nose/eyes have not responded well to standard treatments (antihistamine tablets, steroid nose spray and eye drops).

Will this treatment definitely work for me?

In clinical trials, patients had an improved health-related quality of life and needed less allergy medication. However, a complete cure cannot be guaranteed, and some people get little or no benefit from the treatment.

Unfortunately, neither the allergy tests you have had, nor your symptoms allow us to predict how well you will respond to treatment. Improvement can be slow, but by 4 months of treatment we expect to see some benefit. If the treatment is not working, we can stop it. The recommended length of treatment is 3 years.

How do I take the treatment?

We will demonstrate to you how to take the Acarizax. The Acarizax tablet is placed under the tongue and allowed to dissolve. Importantly:

- Make sure your hands are dry before handling the tablet
- Do not eat or drink 5 minutes before or after taking Acarizax
- Do not do strenuous exercise for 1 hour after taking Acarizax
- The treatment needs to be taken every day for it to be effective unless there is a medical reason not to take it

When should I not take Acarizax?

Some situations can increase the risk of an allergic reaction to Acarizax. Do not take Acarizax if:

- You have lost a tooth or had dental/oral surgery
- You have a raw area in the mouth or mouth ulcers

- Stop Acarizax on the day of any vaccinations, it can be started again the next day if you are well
- Pregnancy: use of Acarizax in pregnant women has not been studied. Please let us know if you are pregnant or planning pregnancy
- Other medications: please let us know if your medications change or you are diagnosed with a new medical condition

I have asthma, does this matter?

We will have considered your asthma when deciding if Acarizax will be safe for you to take. If your asthma gets worse, stop the Acarizax and let us know. See your GP or asthma nurse for advice about your asthma. Once your asthma is better controlled, contact us for advice about restarting treatment.

What happens if I forget to take Acarizax, or need to stop it for a medical reason?

If you have forgotten to take a tablet, take it later in the day. Do not take a double dose if you miss a day completely.

If you have not taken Acarizax for more than 7 days you will need to restart under medical observation. Please contact us to arrange this.

What are the side effects?

The complete list of side effects can be found in the leaflet enclosed with your Acarizax tablets.

- Common side effects: itching or mild swelling of the mouth, lips, or throat discomfort lasting for a few minutes to a few hours. This improves over 2–3 weeks as you get used to the treatment
- Rare side effects: tummy discomfort, tummy pain, diarrhoea, hay fever type symptoms
- Very rare: drowsiness or fatigue
- Extremely rare: severe allergic reactions

Antihistamines can be used to treat mild side effects. In the unlikely event of a severe allergic reaction, seek emergency medical assistance and stop treatment. Please inform us of any severe allergic reaction.

When will I be followed up?

We will arrange a follow up with a telephone call at regular intervals, depending on your requirements. A face-to-face appointment can also be arranged if needed.

Where will I collect my prescriptions?

After your first appointment you will take away a months' supply of Acarizax. Provided you are well on the treatment, we will then prescribe your treatment every 3 months. Depending on current policies, we may be able to post this to you or you may need to come and collect supplied from Heartlands Hospital pharmacy.

Contact us

If you have any other questions or concerns:

- Telephone: 0121 424 1807 or 0121 424 2169 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)
- Email: I&AMedicalSecretaries@uhb.nhs.uk

Useful links:

- www.allergyuk.org. – Helpline and information service to support people with allergies
- www.nhs.uk/conditions/allergies. – information on symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of allergies.
- www.bsaci.org.uk. – The British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology. Helpful for both patients and health care professionals alike

Accessibility

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