



allergist

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Advice From Your Allergist on New Allergy Tablets

Allergists can now offer more relief options to some allergy patients. Allergy tablets may be prescribed to treat people who are allergic to ragweed and some grass pollen.

What are allergy tablets?

Allergy tablets are a form of sublingual immunotherapy (SLIT). They offer a way to treat some allergies without shots. The tablets are placed under the tongue for one to two minutes and then swallowed as they dissolve. The process is repeated from three days a week to as often as daily. The tablets will increase your tolerance to the pollen and reduce your symptoms over time. For continued effectiveness, treatment may be needed for three years or longer. Allergy tablets are currently available for ragweed and grass pollen only.

Will SLIT tablets work for me?

Treatment with allergy tablets may begin after it is determined you are allergic to the grass or ragweed pollen. Different tablets are approved for specific ages. Your allergist will help you determine the best treatment for your allergic condition.

Allergists are specialists trained in the best methods for allergy testing and treatment. Your allergist will help you identify the cause

of your allergy symptoms. When combined with a detailed medical history, allergy testing can help find the specific cause of your allergic reactions.

Are the new allergy tablets safe?

Side effects for adults and children are usually local and mild, occurring most often early in treatment. They include itching of the mouth or stomach problems. These can usually be managed by dose adjustments after discussion with your allergist.

The risks of SLIT mostly relate to the nature of the treatment. The tablets are taken at home without direct medical supervision. You should receive clear guidance from your allergist on what to do if you experience a rare, but severe, allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) or miss a scheduled treatment. You need to know when to consult your allergist. An epinephrine auto-injector will be prescribed to treat a severe reaction at home.

Before taking this medication, read and understand the Medication Guide that is approved by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) for each product and follow the instructions and precautions that are in these guides. You must also read and understand warnings in the package insert.

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Are allergy tablets better than allergy shots?

Both types of immunotherapy help the body build resistance to the effects of an allergen. They reduce the symptoms caused by allergens. Immunotherapy can sometimes make skin test reactions disappear.

The new allergy tablets treat only one type of allergen. Allergy sufferers are typically allergic to more than one allergen. Allergy shots, also known as subcutaneous immunotherapy (SCIT), can provide relief to several allergens. More allergens are available for allergy shots than allergy tablets. Allergy shots are effective in treating allergies to many allergens including allergy to tree, grass, weed, mold, house dust, dander, mold, and stinging insects.

Allergy shots are a proven treatment for more than 100 years. It is the only treatment that changes the immune system and prevents new allergies and asthma from developing. Research shows allergy shots reduce health care use and costs from prescription medicines, office visits and hospitalization.

Allergy shots are effective in treating allergy to ragweed relatives like avocado, melons and some fruits. It is unknown whether the new ragweed allergy tablets will offer this protection.

There are pros and cons of these different forms of treatment. Board-certified allergists can help you make good short-term and long-term choices.

Will SLIT be available for other allergies?

Research has shown SLIT is relatively safe and effective for the treatment of rhinitis (hay fever) and asthma caused by allergies to dust mites, cat dander and tree pollens. In addition, it may be an effective therapy for children with mild atopic dermatitis (eczema). It is currently being studied as a potential treatment for food allergies.

There are many ways to treat allergies. Each person's treatment is based on how often they have symptoms, how bad they are and how long they last. If you have more questions, you should speak to your allergist.

Get tested! Get treated! Get better!



For more information about allergy treatment, and to locate a board-certified allergist in your area, visit AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org.

Board-certified allergists are specialists in diagnosing and treating allergies and asthma.