

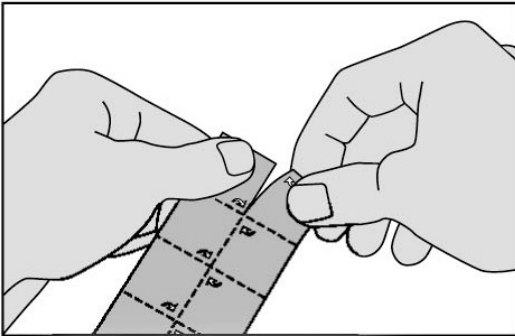
## ***Dr Raymond J Mullins***

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### **Instructions for Sublingual /Oral Immunotherapy with ACTAIR DUST MITE TABLETS for Hay fever & Asthma** April 2020

#### **Allergen Extracts**

Dust mite (Actair) immunotherapy tablets are designed to help switch off the allergic response. They are stored at room temperature (less than 25 degrees centigrade, preferably in the dark), making them more convenient for travel.



#### **Getting the tablets out of the foil**

##### Actair (dust mite)

Press the tablet through the foil

#### **Protocol**

*\* 1<sup>st</sup> dose is given under medical supervision with a 30 minutes wait period in case you get tongue/throat swelling*

##### Actair (dust mite)

Take 1 x 100 unit tablet day 1; take 2 x 100 unit tablets day 2, then 1 x 300 units tablet/day.

#### **How to take immunotherapy tablets**

- Best taken in the morning on an empty stomach
- Place under the tongue; do NOT swallow them!
- Let them dissolve under tongue for at least 2 minutes, then swallow.
- The tablets may have a chalky taste.
- Do NOT eat or drink anything for at least 5 minutes (10 or 15 is probably better); that is because they are partially absorbed from under the tongue. Allergen stays in place for a couple of hours if taken properly. If you eat/drink too soon it washes away.
- Avoid crunchy cereals in the morning; they can cut the mouth lining & increase mouth irritation. If you have had dental treatment, you may need to stop for a few days until it heals up, as broken mouth tissue may increase the risk of mouth irritation.
- Take them 7 days/week.
- If you forget to take them in the morning, take them later in the day.
- If you forget one dose, do NOT take additional catch-up doses. (ie. take no more than 1 tablet/day).
- If you forget for a week, then your next dose should be taken under medical supervision with a 30 minute wait period, just like your first ever dose.

#### **Side-effects of oral immunotherapy:**

- Irritation or itching inside the mouth and throat and sometimes sensation of swelling (very common).
- Stomach upset, nausea, diarrhea, stomach or chest discomfort, tight chest (common)
- Throat swelling, tight chest, asthma, rash, shortness of breath, itchy ears, runny blocked nose, vomiting (uncommon)

I recommend taking an antihistamine daily for the first 2-3 weeks of treatment to reduce the risk. Itchy mouth usually goes after 2-3 weeks. If more severe side-effects occur, contact Dr Mullins.

#### **Ongoing bad side-effects: tell Dr Mullins**

- If local itch and swelling fails to settle, the change the location of administration to behind the lower lip in front of the teeth, hold 2 minutes, then swallow. There are theoretical reasons why this should be as effective with less side-effects (although this method has NOT been specifically studied with this product).
- If nausea/stomach upset is bad, then hold in the mouth for 2-3 minutes, then spit out the allergen into the sink (not swallow).

#### **Cost and payment**

All tablets are available on prescription from the chemist. The current cost is around \$100 per month for dust mite tablets. All tablets have full registration status in Australia. The implication is that if you have private health insurance with ancillary (medication) cover, you may get a partial to cover part of the cost.

#### **PROTOCOL**

Dust mite (daily all year round);

#### **Duration of treatment:**

If it helps, continue for 3 years total.

#### **Review benefit at 6 months**

I would suggest review 6 months after starting to examine benefit and side-effects and plan for the future. It normally takes 3-5 months to see benefit, so do not be discouraged. Improvement continues with even more prolonged treatment. The aim is to feel better (less symptoms, less often) with less medicine.