

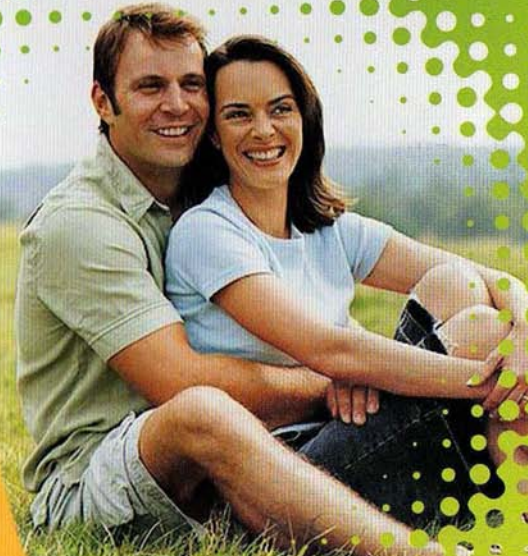
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Grass Pollen Allergy

All you need to know about Allergy
& Allergen Immunotherapy





Allergic rhinitis due to grass pollen

1/ What is seasonal allergic rhinitis?

Seasonal allergic rhinitis, often called "**hay fever**", is an **affection that occurs every year during the pollen season.**

It can be triggered by pollen of:

- Trees
- Grasses
- Weeds

Grass pollen are the main offenders for allergic rhinitis sufferers. They have a high allergenic potential.

DID YOU KNOW ?

Hay fever is a misnomer. Hay neither causes allergic rhinitis nor fever.

The term *Hay fever* comes from the fact that sneezing, nasal congestion and eye irritation was fairly common in people harvesting hay fields.

2/ Where and when does grass pollen exposure occur?

Pollination occurs when **plants release pollen grains into the air we breathe.**



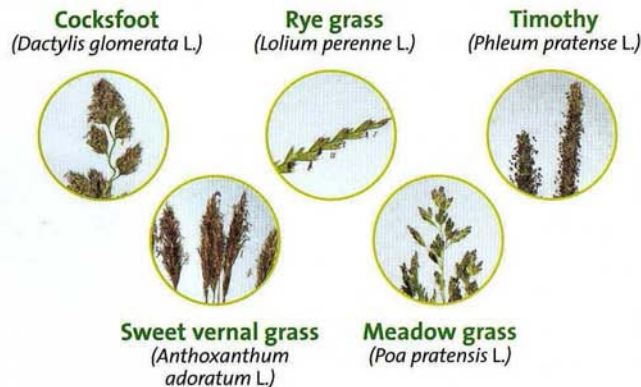
Exposure to grass pollen is widespread throughout Europe and North America. Within Europe, the distribution of allergenic grass pollen varies widely and is strongly affected by climate.

In general, **the grass pollination season stretches from April to July and peaks in June.**

Diagnosis & Treatment

3/ What are the most common grass pollen that cause allergy?

Many grass species are involved in allergy. The most common grass pollen that cause allergies are:



4/ What are the symptoms of allergic rhinitis?

Symptoms include: **itchy, stuffy/clear runny nose** and **sneezing**. **Itchy, red and watery eyes** can also occur when a conjunctivitis is associated, which is often the case⁽¹⁾.

5/ Is allergic rhinitis common?

Allergic rhinitis is a **common health problem worldwide**. In Europe, it is estimated that 25% of adults suffer from allergic rhinitis⁽¹⁾.

6/ What is the impact of grass pollen allergy on your life?

- Grass pollen allergy may affect your daily life: **disrupt sleep** causing daytime fatigue, impairing concentration at work, limited outdoor activities.
- If not properly treated, **the disease can progress into asthma** or you can develop new allergies.

(1) Bousquet J et al. Allergic Rhinitis and its Impact on Asthma (ARIA) 2008 Update. Allergy 2008;63(Suppl.86):8-160

7/ How is grass pollen allergy diagnosed?

To diagnose grass pollen allergy, your allergy specialist can generally proceed as follows:

- **Patient history:** an important part of the evaluation process; includes the nature, duration and the time course of your allergic symptoms.
- **Skin prick test:** a small amount of allergen is applied to your skin, then your arm is pricked. If you are allergic, a small wheal (red and swollen spot) will appear on your skin.
- **Blood tests:** increased levels of immunoglobulin E (IgE) antibodies to a specific allergen may also confirm allergy.

8/ How can grass pollen allergy be treated?

Currently, there are 3 ways of treating grass pollen allergy:

Allergen avoidance

Avoiding contact with grass pollen you are allergic to is difficult.

During the grass pollination period you can:

- **Limit or cancel certain outdoor activities**, including picnics, walk in the countryside and gardening.
- **Wash your hair** after any of these activities and before going to sleep.
- **Use air conditioning** in the home and in the car instead of leaving windows open.

• Symptomatic treatments

Many medications that minimise the symptoms of grass pollen allergy are available (antihistamines, corticoids...). **They are effective but their effects are temporary and symptoms return when treatment is stopped.** They act by modulating the recruitment of some molecules involved in allergy mechanisms.

These drugs do not treat the underlying cause of the allergy nor do they act on the natural course of the disease. Grass pollen allergy can **still progress into asthma** or other allergies.

• Allergen immunotherapy (desensitisation)

ALLERGEN IMMUNOTHERAPY ACTS BY:

Exposing yourself to a small amount of the identified allergen(s) you are allergic to

↓
The immune system produces "blocking" antibodies

↓
Reduce allergy symptoms
Render yourself more tolerant to allergens in the future

Diagnosis & Treatment

• 9/ How is allergen immunotherapy administered? 2 routes of administration exist:

• Subcutaneous immunotherapy (SCIT):

The allergen **is injected under the skin** with a needle. Treatment must be administered at your doctor's office.

• Sublingual immunotherapy (SLIT):

The allergen is administered sublingually, under the tongue either in liquid or tablet form.

After the first dose intake at the doctor's office, treatment may be **administered at home** following the directions of your allergy specialist.

The protocols depends on the product used.

Please refer to your allergy specialist.

DID YOU KNOW ?

For grass pollen allergy, the desensitisation treatment is administered through a **pre-coseasonal treatment**: it begins before and continues during the pollen season (**≈6 months/year**), during at least 3 consecutive pollen seasons⁽¹⁾

(1) Bousquet J, Lockey R, Malling HJ. Allergen immunotherapy: therapeutic vaccines for allergic diseases. A WHO position paper. J Allergy Clin Immunol 1998;102:558-62.



10/ When are the benefits of sublingual immunotherapy expected to appear?

With SLIT, **grass pollen allergy symptoms are improved from the first season on.**

11/ Does sublingual immunotherapy have any side effect?

Most frequently, reactions that may occur are local:

- Local effects in mouth and/or throat: such as itching or tingling in the mouth, ear pruritus.
- Local digestive effects: digestive disorders like nausea or abdominal pain.

In rare cases, stronger general allergic reactions may occur, such as: urticaria, asthma, Quinke's edema, feeling unwell.

In case of an adverse event, please contact your doctor immediately.

Your doctor has prescribed ORALAIR® for your grass pollen allergy and you have questions...

Oralair®

100 IR & 300 IR or 300 IR sublingual tablets

What is ORALAIR®?

A sublingual immunotherapy tablet with a 5-grass pollen allergen composition.



What kind of treatment is ORALAIR®?

ORALAIR® is a pre-coseasonal treatment: Depending on the length of the pollen season, ORALAIR® should be administered for a total of 5 to 7 months per year during 3 years (ie. 3 consecutive pollen seasons)⁽¹⁾.



DO YOU KNOW HOW TO TAKE ORALAIR®?

- Once daily in the morning before eating,
- 1 place the tablet under the tongue until complete dissolution (at least 1 minute),
 - 2 then swallow it.

