



## Don't like needles?

*Treat your allergies WITHOUT SHOTS!*

### What is SLIT?

Sublingual immunotherapy (SLIT) is the use of daily oral drops to treat allergies. Similar to allergy injections (SCIT), SLIT addresses underlying causes of allergies rather than simply treating symptoms. SLIT is given in gradually increasing doses & is an alternative to allergy injections.

There are three alternative approaches to allergy treatment: (1) avoidance of recognized environmental allergens, (2) antihistamines and/or nasal steroid for symptom control, and (3) immunotherapy by injection or sublingual drops (SLIT). The purpose of immunotherapy is to alter your immune system's response to naturally occurring allergens (pollen, mold, etc.) These alterations may permit you to tolerate exposure to the allergens with fewer symptoms and you, in effect, become "immune".

### How do allergy drops work?

Allergy drops are started at very low doses and gradually increase until a therapeutic dose is reached. The allergy drops are applied under the tongue once a day and held there for two minutes and then swallowed. When placed under the tongue, the serum stimulates the dendritic cells under the tongue and helps build the body's tolerance to allergens. Sublingual immunotherapy is continued on a daily basis for 3-5 years.

Improvement in your symptoms will not be immediate and may not be complete. Various studies have shown symptom reduction from SLIT to range from 30% to 70%. Of course, each individual patient's response will vary, but improvement should be evident within the first few months of treatment. Your doctors will periodically review your treatment plan with you to be certain that you are achieving maximum efficacy with your particular prescription.



### **Which allergies does it treat?**

The most common allergies treated with allergy drops include Allergic Rhinitis (hay fever), Watery/Itchy Eyes, Asthma, Chronic Sinus Infections, and Chronic Cough.

### **Is it safe?**

The excellent safety profile that has been shown for SLIT does not mean there is not risk associated with this immunotherapy technique. Appropriate caution is still advised. Some adverse reactions may be life threatening and may require immediate medical attention.

Research studies show that sublingual allergy drops are a safe, effective form of immunotherapy. SLIT is started at very low doses and gradually increased until a therapeutic dose or “maintenance dose” is reached. SLIT is continued on a daily basis for 3-5 years. Clinical improvement is usually observed within 3-6 months of treatment. Please consult with your physician immediately if your symptoms worsen with drop therapy, or if you decide to discontinue treatment for any reason.

### **Will my insurance cover allergy shots?**

Allergen serum used for injection immunotherapy is the same used for sublingual immunotherapy. However, because the serum has been specifically approved for injections, the “route” of sublingual is considered to be investigational and “off-label”. Off-label use of medication is common, however most health insurance policies will not cover the serum itself, and we will not bill your insurance for SLIT. You may be able to use Flexible or Health Savings accounts to cover the cost of SLIT.

### **SLIT vs Allergy Shots**

The dose is delivered under tongue versus injections

SLIT can be more affordable than allergy shots for some patients

SLIT is safer than allergy shots

SLIT is easy to use for children

The doses can be administered at home rather than in a medical office

### **Benefits of Sublingual Immunotherapy**

Lasting relief from nasal allergy and asthma symptoms

Reduces dependence and use of pharmaceutical drugs

No sedation or drowsiness

No more shots

