

The tree bark pill that may beat DVT

A PILL made from tree bark is being hailed as a breakthrough against the dangers of deep vein thrombosis.

Dr John Scurr, who pioneered research into so-called economy class syndrome, claims that a new pill, Ziopin, could be twice as effective against the condition as well as being perfectly safe.

He said: 'This pill is one of the most effective means we have found to date. I think it will be very useful and many passengers will benefit.'

The pill contains the active ingredient pycnogenol, which is found naturally in the bark of maritime pines growing in Gascony, on the south-west coast of France.

Ziopin will be available from next month and can be prescribed to any patient thought to be at risk during a long-haul flight.

About 8,000 to 9,000 British air travellers develop DVT each year.

Those on the Pill or HRT may be at greater risk.

DVT involves blood clots developing in the legs. It can be fatal if a clot breaks away and reaches the lungs, causing a pulmonary embolism.

One in 100 who develop DVT will die and the condition kills 500 to 1,000 each year.

Until now, attempts to reduce cases has centred on aspirin, which some experts think can thin the blood enough to prevent the clots.