

HAYFEVER

Seasonal allergic rhinitis

How you can manage your symptoms

ABOUT HAYFEVER

- ◆ It is a common condition also known as **seasonal allergic rhinitis**.
- ◆ It is an allergic condition where the body's immune system overreacts to substances that are usually harmless, for example pollen from grasses, flowers, weeds or trees.
- ◆ It affects around 1 in 5 people in the UK and it often runs in families.
- ◆ It is more likely to affect people who suffer from asthma and eczema.

ABOUT HAYFEVER

- ◆ Pollen causes the release of a chemical called histamine from cells in the nose, eyes and airways.
- ◆ Histamine causes inflammation and this inflammation causes the symptoms of hayfever.
- ◆ Some people suffer symptoms all year round.
 - They are allergic to indoor allergens such as house dust mites, pets and indoor moulds.
 - This is called perennial allergic rhinitis.

SYMPTOMS

- ◆ Sneezing
- ◆ Fatigue
- ◆ Itchy, blocked or runny nose
- ◆ Red, itchy, puffy or watery eyes
- ◆ Itchy throat
- ◆ Headaches and sinus pain

MANAGING YOUR HAYFEVER

- ◆ The severity of symptoms can vary.
- ◆ Some people need medication to manage their symptoms.
- ◆ Others manage their condition by avoiding triggers.
- ◆ If treatment is needed, a wide range of medications can be purchased from community pharmacies and supermarkets.
- ◆ These medications are usually cheaper than a prescription and you can get them without seeing your doctor.

How can I avoid triggers?

- ◆ Keep the windows shut in the house and the car especially when the pollen counts are high.
- ◆ Avoid cutting the grass, grassy areas, woodland, pollutants and car fumes.
- ◆ Wear wrap-around sunglasses.
- ◆ When you get indoors wash your hands, face, hair, rinse your eyes and change your clothes.

How can I avoid triggers?

- ◆ If possible stay indoors when the pollen count is high.
- ◆ Use petroleum jelly inside your nose to block inhalation of pollen.
- ◆ Keep your house clean and wear a mask and glasses when doing house work.
- ◆ Don't dry washing outside to avoid pollen sticking to your clothes.
- ◆ You could buy a pollen filter for the air vents in the car.

What treatments can I buy?

Speak to a local pharmacist to get advice on the best treatment for your symptoms

- ◆ Antihistamine tablets and syrup, for example:
 - Chlorphenamine
 - Cetirizine
 - Loratadine
 - Acrivastine
- ◆ Antihistamine nasal sprays, e.g. Rhinolast
- ◆ Steroid nasal sprays, e.g. Beconase and Flixonase
- ◆ Eye drops, e.g. Hay-Crom, Opticrom and Alomide Allergy
- ◆ Decongestants, e.g. Sinutab
- ◆ Simple pain relief, e.g. paracetamol

When should I see a GP?

- ◆ If you are experiencing wheezing, breathlessness or tightness in your chest.
- ◆ If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- ◆ If your symptoms are not relieved by over the counter treatments in combination with measures to reduce your exposure to pollen.