

Skeltons Chemists

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Opening Times

Monday to Friday - 8.30am - 5.30pm

Saturday - 8.30am - 3pm

Sundays & Bank Holidays - Closed

Your FREE Healthy Living Leaflet for April 2023

1. What is allergic rhinitis?
2. What percentage of the population does it affect?
3. What are the two main types of pollen that affect people with hay fever?
4. What trees are most likely to release pollen that triggers hay fever?
5. What is the best way to reduce exposure to tree pollen?
6. If you do have to go outside, what should you do?
7. What are the main symptoms?
8. What causes hay fever?
9. Why is it important to treat hay fever?
10. What treatments are there for hay fever?



Don't let allergies
control your day

Answers on the bottom of page two

What is allergic rhinitis?

Allergic rhinitis is the medical term for inflammation of the nasal lining caused by an allergic trigger. Most people call it hay fever. It is very common and affects 10-15% of children and 26% of adults in the UK. The number of people affected by allergic rhinitis has trebled in the last 20 years.

What causes hay fever?

Allergic rhinitis happens when your body makes allergic antibodies to harmless allergens such as pollen, house dust mite or pet dander that are breathed in. For people sensitised to these allergens, exposure causes the release of chemicals such as histamine, which works quickly causing sneezing, itching and runny nose. Other chemicals are released more slowly causing an inflammatory reaction with symptoms such as blocked nose, reduced sense of smell and difficulty sleeping.

The two main types of pollen which affect the

majority of people with hay fever are tree and grass pollen. Tree pollen occurs first, typically from February to June. The types of trees most likely to trigger hay fever are alder, birch, hazel and horse chestnut.



Top tips for reducing exposure to tree pollen

Monitor pollen forecasts daily and if possible, stay indoors when the pollen count is high. If it is not possible to remain indoors:

- Wear a mask, wraparound sunglasses and a hat with a large peak or brim to keep pollen out of your eyes, face and hair.
- If you have been outside for a prolonged period, change your clothing especially before bed. Pollen is indestructible unless washed. It will stay on your hair, body and clothing acting as a constant source of allergen triggering hay fever symptoms.
- Avoid outdoor activities that expose you to pollen, such as mowing lawns or raking leaves.
- Keep windows closed at home and in the car, especially early morning and evening when the pollen count is high.
- Wipe pet's coats with a damp microfibre cloth to remove pollen when they have been out.

What treatment is available?

Antihistamines are the first line of treatment for hay fever and can reduce the symptoms of runny nose and itch, especially in the nose, throat and eyes. It is recommended to use a long acting, non-sedating antihistamine, available in both tablet and syrup form. If you need expert advice on the most suitable choice for you or your child's needs then speak to our pharmacist. It is best to start treatment early – up to two weeks before symptoms usually start for the best results.

Nasal steroid sprays help to reduce inflammation associated with the "stuffy nose" feeling of hay fever and may also reduce allergic eye symptoms. It is important to use your nasal spray correctly to get the most from your medication

How to use your nasal spray –

- ◆ Shake well before use.
- ◆ Follow the manufacturer's instructions to prime the device.

- ◆ Gently blow your nose.
- ◆ Tilt your head slightly forward and insert nozzle.
- ◆ Aim the nozzle away from the middle of your nose and direct into the nasal passage.
- ◆ At the same time press the spray and take a slow steady inhale in.



Saline eye drops can help to control the symptoms of hay fever which causes eyes to itch, be red and irritable. Antihistamine or mast cell stabilisers eye drops are also available for more troublesome symptoms.

Why is it important to treat hay fever?

Rhinitis is often regarded as a trivial problem, but studies have shown that it affects quality of life. It disturbs sleep, impairs day time concentration and ability to carry out tasks, causes people to miss work and school and has been shown to affect examination results. People who have allergic rhinitis are also at increased risk of developing asthma as the upper airway affects the lower part of the airway leading to the lungs. Many asthmatics also have rhinitis which may have an allergic trigger. Asthma can be better controlled with fewer hospital admissions if rhinitis is effectively treated.

There are several medicines that can help control your symptoms. Many of these are available from our pharmacy so if you want advice on which would be best for your symptoms speak to a member of our team.



Answers: Q1, It is when the nasal lining becomes inflamed and is more commonly called hay fever. Q2, 10-15% of children and 26% of adults in the UK. Q3, Tree and grass. Q4, Alder, birch, hazel and horse chestnut. Q5, Monitor the pollen forecasts and stay indoors when the count is high. Q6, Wear a mask, wraparound sunglasses and a hat with a large peak to keep pollen allergens out of your eyes, face and hair. Q7, Sneezing, itchy, blocked or runny nose, red itchy eyes, cough, wheeze, sinus inflammation, itchy ears, nose bleeds. Q8, When your body makes allergic antibodies to harmless airborne allergens like pollen, house dust mite or pet dander. Q9, Studies have shown that it affects quality of life, disturbs sleep, impairs daytime concentration and causes people to miss work or school. Q10, Antihistamines for mild symptoms, plus a corticosteroid nasal spray for a blocked nose and eye drops may help.