

# Skeltons Chemists

2 Congreve Walk, Bedworth, Warwickshire, CV12 8LY

Tel & Fax: 0247 631 3259

Email: [skeltonschemists@btconnect.com](mailto:skeltonschemists@btconnect.com)

## Opening Times

Monday to Friday - 8.30am - 5.30pm

Saturday - 8.30am - 1pm

Sundays & Bank Holidays - Closed

## Your FREE Healthy Living Leaflet for May 2025

1. What is hay fever?
2. What is allergic rhinitis?
3. What are the symptoms?
4. What are the two main categories of allergic rhinitis?
5. What are the common characteristics of seasonal rhinitis?
6. What are the common characteristics of perennial allergic rhinitis?
7. Name two ways to ease hay fever.
8. Name two things you shouldn't do if you have hay fever.
9. How many children in the UK have been diagnosed with an allergy?
10. What are the most common allergies in children?



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### Answers on the bottom of P2

### What is an allergy?

An allergy is the response of the body's immune system to normally harmless substances like pollens, foods, and house dust mites. Whilst in most people, these substances (allergens) pose no problem, in allergic individuals their immune system identifies them as a threat and produces an inappropriate response. This can be relatively minor, such as localised itching but in more serious cases it can cause anaphylaxis which can lead to upper respiratory obstruction and collapse which can be fatal. In the UK



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40% of children have been diagnosed with an allergy. The four most common allergies in children are food allergies, eczema, asthma and hay fever.

Hay fever or allergic rhinitis is when your immune system reacts to allergens in the air such as pollens from trees and grasses. The

most common symptoms of an allergic reaction to these are sneezing and coughing, a runny or blocked nose, itchy, red or watery eyes, itchy throat, mouth, nose and ears, loss of smell, pain around the sides of your head and your forehead, headache and feeling tired.

There are two main types of allergic rhinitis; seasonal and perennial. Seasonal rhinitis typically occurs during specific times of the year and is often associated with seasonal allergens such as pollen from trees, grasses or weeds. Hay fever is



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usually worse between late March and September, especially when it's warm, humid and windy. This is when the pollen count is at its highest.

Perennial allergic rhinitis refers to year-round symptoms that occur regardless of the season. This type of rhinitis is usually caused by indoor allergens such as house dust mites, pet dander and mould spores. The common symptoms of perennial rhinitis are persistent sneezing, nasal congestion, itchy, watery eyes and coughing.

### How to treat hay fever

There is currently no cure for hay fever and you cannot prevent it. But you can do things to ease your symptoms when the pollen count is high:

- Put petroleum jelly (such as Vaseline) around your nostrils to trap pollen
- Wear wraparound sunglasses, a mask or a wide brimmed hat to stop pollen getting into your nose and eyes
- Shower and change your clothes after you have been outside to wash pollen off
- Keep windows and doors shut as much as possible
- Vacuum regularly and dust with a damp cloth
- Try to use a pollen filter in the air vents of your car, if you have one, and a HEPA filter in your vacuum.

You can also stop doing things that make your hay fever worse:

- ◆ Do not cut grass or walk on grass
- ◆ Do not spend too much time outside
- ◆ Do not smoke or be around smoke - it makes your symptoms worse
- ◆ Do not dry clothes outside - they can catch pollen
- ◆ Do not let pets

into the house if possible - they can carry pollen indoors.

Speak to our pharmacist if you have hay fever as they can give advice and suggest the best treatments to help with your symptoms such as:

- \* Antihistamine drops, tablets or nasal sprays
- \* Steroid nasal sprays.

If your symptoms are getting worse or they do not respond after taking medicines from the pharmacy, you should see your GP.

Treatments from your GP might be a steroid treatment but if that doesn't work, they may refer you for immunotherapy. This means you

will be given small amounts of pollen as an injection to slowly build up your immunity to pollen. This kind of treatment usually starts a few months before the hay fever season begins.

Immunotherapy is a specialist service that may not be available everywhere.



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**For more information on this or any other health concern, chat to one of our trained staff today.**

Answers: Q1, It is when your immune system overreacts to allergens in the air. Q2, It is another name for hay fever. Q3, Persistent sneezing, runny or stuffy nose, itchy, red and watery eyes, itchy throat or ears, fatigue and irritability. Q4, Seasonal and perennial. Q5, Symptoms triggered by outdoor allergens and usually occur during specific seasons, allergens like tree pollen in the spring or grass pollen in the summer may cause symptoms such as sneezing, runny nose, itchy eyes, throat or ears. Q6, Year-round symptoms that occur regardless of the season. Q7, Put Vaseline around your nose, wear wraparound sunglasses, shower and change your clothes when you've been outside, keep windows and doors shut, vacuum regularly, dust with a damp cloth, have pollen filters in your car. Q8, Don't cut grass, don't spend much time outside, don't have pets in the house. Q9, 40%. Q10, Food allergy, eczema, asthma and hay fever.