

Ingredients for saline wash solution:

- 240 mls previously boiled and cooled water
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

Antihistamines - They are available in liquid, tablet and nasal spray form. There is a large range of antihistamines, but generally daily non-sedating antihistamines are recommended e.g. cetirizine. If one does not suit you it may be worth trying a different one. Antihistamines are available over the counter in pharmacies or on prescription.

Steroid nasal spray - This is the most effective treatment for allergic rhinitis.

Taking nasal sprays

- Shake bottle well
- Look down
- Using RIGHT hand for LEFT nostril put nozzle just inside nose and aim towards outside wall
- Squirt once or twice (2 different directions)
- Change hands and repeat for the other side
- DO NOT SNIFF HARD



Nasal sprays are available over the counter e.g. Fluticasone or on prescription. There are several types of nasal spray so you may need to try more than one to find one that works best for you.

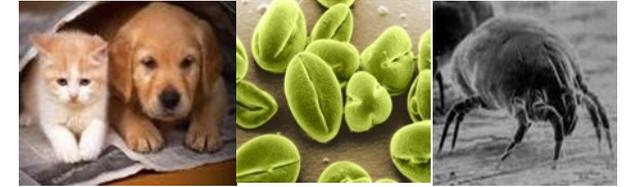
Eye drops -Antihistamines and nasal sprays can help to ease eye symptoms. Sodium cromoglycate eye drops can be obtained over the counter or on prescription and can also help.

Montelukast –This is another drug that blocks chemicals that cause inflammation (like antihistamines). It can be particularly useful in perennial rhinitis. It is only available on prescription.

Decongestants –These drugs e.g. Otrivine should be avoided as much as possible. If these drugs are used frequently then symptoms can get even worse and be difficult to control.

Immunotherapy –This is for patients with very severe allergic rhinitis despite taking maximum conventional medication.

Your allergy consultant or nurse will discuss this treatment with you and provide more information if they feel it is suitable in your case.



Allergic Rhinitis

Patient Information Leaflet

Immunology Service
Haematology and Oncology Directorate

Specialist nurse telephone : 01782 672504

Secretary's telephone: 01782 674284

Further information

www.allergyuk.org

Allergy UK, Planwell House, LEFA Business
Park, Edgington Way, Sidcup, Kent. DA14
5BH

Tel: 01322 619898

Patient Advice and Liaison Service

Tel: 01782 676450

Email: patientadvice.uhnm@nhs.net

What is allergic rhinitis?

Rhinitis is inflammation of the nose. Symptoms include sneezing, runny nose, blocked / stuffy nose, itching and 'post-nasal drip' (the sensation of mucus running down the back of the throat). It can occur in association with inflammation of the eyes or sinuses. Rhinitis can have several causes, such as infection, a reaction to medication, irritation by dusts, or allergy. When allergy causes rhinitis, the condition is called 'allergic rhinitis'.

Allergic rhinitis can be seasonal or all year round:

Allergen	Symptoms occur in:
Grass pollen	Summer (Summer hayfever)
Tree pollen	Spring (Spring hayfever)
House dust mite	All year round (perennial)
Pets	All year round (perennial)

How can I avoid pollen?

- Monitor pollen forecasts daily. Rain washes pollen from the air so pollen counts should be lower on cooler, wet days.
- Use saline nasal rinses to remove pollen and allergens from the nose.
- Apply a barrier/balm e.g. Vaseline®, to the entrance of the nostrils to trap/block allergens.

- On days when the pollen count is high, when getting home remove your clothing and shower.
- Keep windows closed when indoors. Pay particular attention in early mornings when the pollen is released into the air and in the evening when the air cools and pollen begins to fall to the ground.
- Wear wraparound sunglasses and a wide brimmed hat.
- Avoid drying washing on an outdoor clothes line when the pollen count is high.
- Wipe a pet's coat with a damp cloth to remove any pollen particles.
- Try and avoid triggers or take an antihistamine before known exposure.

How can I avoid house dust mite (HDM)?

- You cannot avoid house dust mite!
- HDM are found mainly in the bed, soft furnishings and carpets. Only limited benefit can be obtained from HDM avoidance, so try a few basic things:
- Wash bedding often and at more than 60°C if possible.
- Cover mattress and pillows in dust mite-proof covers.
- HDM like moist warm conditions, so let the bed air during the day and leave the window open to ventilate the room.

What if I am allergic to my pet?

Most pet owners tolerate their own pets and have problems when exposed to other pets.

If you have a new pet and have been found allergic, the most effective way to reduce your symptoms will be to rehome your pet.

If this is not possible, try the following:

- Avoid close contact with your pet (e.g. cuddling, kissing, allowing to sit in your lap).
- Keep your pet away from your bedding, sofa and other areas that you frequently use.

Where possible, replace carpets with wooden floors to reduce amount of pet fur/dust mite in the house.

How can I use my medication most effectively?

All rhinitis medication should be taken regularly to gain the maximum benefit. It is more difficult to treat symptoms that are already well established. We recommend starting your treatments at least 2 weeks before your symptoms usually begin.

Nasal washes - Washing the nose with a saline wash can relieve symptoms and clean the nose prior to using a nasal spray. The solution can simply be sniffed up the nose, or if preferred proprietary devices are available e.g. Sinus Rinse™.