

Hayfever

Are you treating it right?

If you're one of the 3 million people affected by hayfever in Britain every year, it's likely that you dread summer.

Hayfever is caused by an allergy to pollen – the body's immune system over-reacts to the presence of the pollen as if it was something toxic. Consequently, the nasal airway and eyes become inflamed and painful.

Different pollens are present at different times of the year.

Therefore, the time you are affected depends upon which pollen you are allergic to. Muggy weather and poor air quality can also aggravate the situation.

So, what's the most effective way to treat hayfever? Staying away from pollen is the ideal prevention – but not always practical.

A simple **Treatment Tree** is shown on page 2 to help you deal with your hayfever effectively – so you can concentrate on enjoying your summer!



Consumer Health
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How to help yourself

There are several things you can do to lessen symptoms by avoiding contact with pollen.

High 5! Pollen counts are at their highest between 5pm and 7pm, and 7am and 9am. If possible, stay inside at this time of day with the windows and doors closed.

Sleep soundly Keep windows closed when you're in bed at night. It may also help to wash your hair if you've been outside as pollen could be trapped in your hair.

Summer-clean! Keep pollen and dust out of your home by vacuuming and damp-dusting regularly. It's also a good idea to change your clothes when you arrive home and brush your pets if you've been for a walk in the country – they could be carrying pollen too!

Shady days Always wear close-fitting sunglasses when you go outside.

No-go areas Try to avoid areas of high pollen concentration, such as gardens, parks and woodland (especially if the grass has just been cut). If you need to work in these areas a mask and goggles may help.

Fuming Try to avoid unnecessary irritants such as pollution and car fumes.

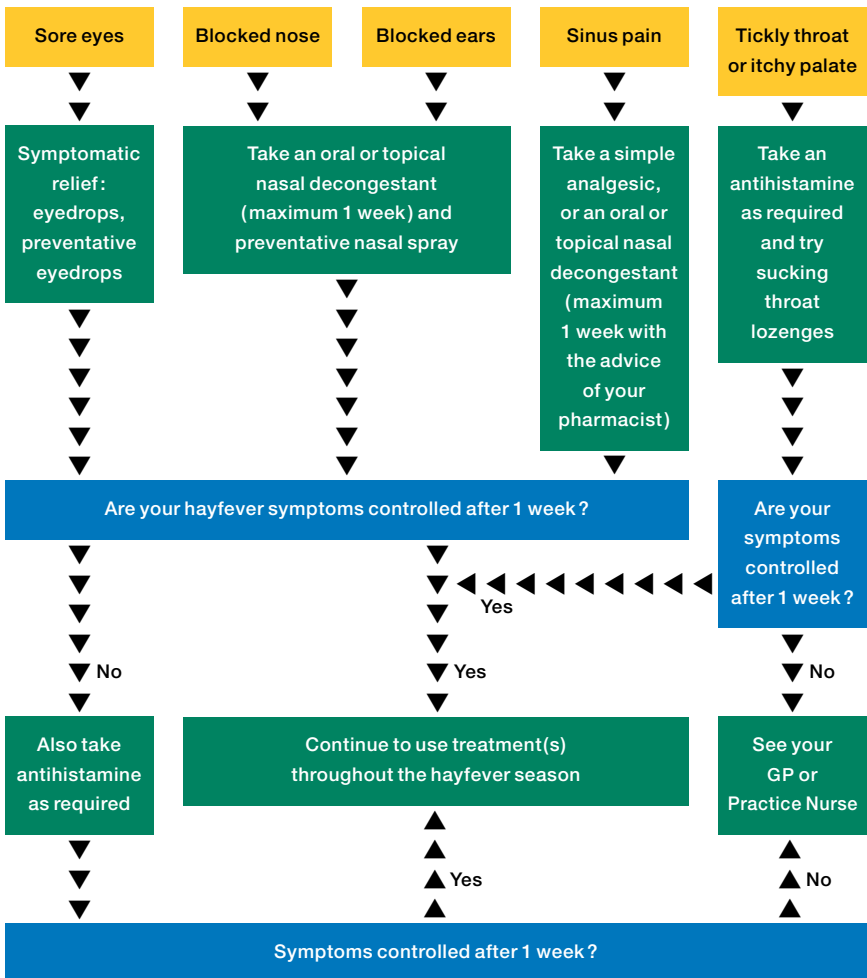
For more information on hayfever visit www.chic.org.uk

Hayfever Treatment Tree

Have you got the main symptoms of hayfever?
Sneezing, runny nose, blocked nose, itchy nose and throat, watering eyes?

▼ Yes

Refer to the Treatment Guide for a list of antihistamine products that will help relieve your symptoms.
Ask your pharmacist for advice if you're still not sure of the best way to treat your hayfever this summer!



Hayfever Treatment Guide

Hayfever causes a variety of symptoms including sore eyes, blocked nose, blocked ears, sneezing, sinus pain and tickly throat or itchy palate. An oral or nasal antihistamine product may well deal with all of your symptoms and a full range of effective medication for hayfever is available over the counter from pharmacies.

There are four types of hayfever product (see below and page 4):

Oral antihistamines

Nasal preparations

Oral decongestants

Eye preparations

If you only suffer from some symptoms and you prefer a specific product, check the **Treatment Tree** to find the product which suits you best.

Some hayfever products are not suitable if you're taking certain other medicines – or shouldn't be taken by children or pregnant women. Ask your pharmacist for advice.



Oral antihistamines

Antihistamines are generally effective in controlling the typical symptoms of hayfever: sneezing, running nose, watery eyes and itching nose and throat.

Antihistamines are more effective if they are taken before the symptoms occur – rather than after they have started.

Some of the 'older' antihistamine products have the potential to make some people drowsy. This may be a benefit if your symptoms are disturbing your sleep, but you should take care if you're driving or operating machinery. The newer preparations are less likely to cause drowsiness. Ask your pharmacist for advice.

Treatment choices :

- Benadryl Allergy Relief Capsules
- Benadryl One a Day Relief Tablets
- Calimal Tablets
- Claritin Allergy Tablets and Syrup
- Histergan
- Phenergan Elixir and Tablets
- Piriteze Tablets
- Piriton Allergy Tablets and Syrup
- Pollenase Antihistamine Tablets
- Tavegil Elixir and Tablets
- Zirtek Allergy Tablets

You should see your GP if any of the following applies to you.

You are experiencing:

- Wheezing
- Breathlessness
- Tightness in the chest

You:

- Are pregnant
- Are breastfeeding

Nasal preparations

Antihistamine nasal treatments

These are ideal if you prefer using a nasal spray rather than taking a tablet. **Treatment choices:**

- Livostin Direct Nasal Spray
- Rhinolast Hayfever Nasal Spray

Nasal anti-inflammatory preparations

These medicines work by suppressing the allergic response and reducing the inflammation and swelling that can be caused by hayfever. For best results start to use this medication before the hayfever season begins, as these products take about 3 days to start working. You should use these products throughout the season, even if your symptoms seem to have improved. **Treatment choices:**

- Beconase Hayfever Spray
- Care Hayfever Relief Nasal Spray
- Nasobec Hayfever Spray
- Rynacrom Allergy Nasal Spray

Nasal decongestants

These can help relieve a blocked nose and inflammation. Most **anti-allergy nasal preparations** are perfectly appropriate to use throughout the hayfever season. However, some nasal decongestants can cause 'rebound congestion' and should not be used for a prolonged period. Ask your pharmacist for advice. **Treatment choices:**

- Afrazine Spray ■ Fenox
- Otrivine Nasal Spray ■ Vicks Sinex

Combination products

A blocked nose can cause sinus pain. These products tend to treat nasal decongestion and sinus pain associated with hayfever – as well as the typical symptoms of hayfever. **Treatment choices:**

- Benadryl Plus ■ Haymine Tablets

Oral decongestants

If you're congested you may prefer to take a tablet, rather than use a nasal spray. **Treatment choices:**

- Contac 400 ■ Otrivine Mu-Cron ■ Sudafed

Eye preparations

Most eye symptoms caused by hayfever will be controlled by antihistamines. If your eyes are particularly troublesome, you may find it helps to use some eyedrops.

If your hayfever symptoms **only** occur in the eyes, products containing **sodium cromoglycate** are particularly helpful.

Treatment choices:

- Alomide Allergy Eyedrops
- Clarityn Allergy Eye Drops
- Haycrom Hayfever Eyedrops
- Opticrom Allergy Eyedrops
- Optrex Allergy Eyedrops

Alternative antihistamine eyedrop **treatment choice:**

- Livostin Direct Eyedrops

Some products contain antihistamine **and** decongestant:

Treatment choices:

- Otrivine-Antistin Eyedrops

Always check with your pharmacist or optometrist if you wear contacts before using eyedrops.