

**Dr Cord Bredemeyer  
Dr Alan Holman  
Dr Ruth Arkle  
Dr Kathy Rainsbury**



**Roborough Surgery  
1 Eastcote Close  
Roborough  
Plymouth PL6 6PH**

**Tel: (01752) 701659**

**Web: [www.roboroughsurgery.org.uk](http://www.roboroughsurgery.org.uk)**

## TREATMENT OF HAYFEVER

### 1. Avoiding exposure to pollen in the air

- Be aware of the pollen count
- Avoid the countryside when the pollen count is high
- Keep your windows shut when travelling in a car and ensure your car has a pollen filter
- Avoid being outdoors at times when the pollen count is high, for example, when the air is warming in the mornings and cooling in the evenings
- Keep the bedroom windows closed early morning and evening when the pollen concentration is high
- Hide your pillow under the bed covers during the day to prevent pollen from settling on it when the windows are open
- Wear glasses to protect your eyes from pollen when outside o Wash your face and hair and change your clothes when coming indoors on days when the pollen count is high
- Wipe Vaseline around your nose and eyes to trap pollen and prevent some from entering your nose and eyes
- Consider using a nasal air filter - [www.nasalairfilter.com](http://www.nasalairfilter.com)
- Carry out nasal douching - ( [www.sterimarnasal.co.uk](http://www.sterimarnasal.co.uk) / [www.neilmed.com/uk](http://www.neilmed.com/uk) )

### 2. Medication

For many people, hayfever symptoms can be controlled with over-the-counter medication: steroid nose sprays, antihistamine tablets/syrup/nose sprays and eye drops. Ask a pharmacist to guide you if you have never bought this type of medication before.

Saline sprays/douches are not medicated but will support nasal hygiene, wash away any trapped allergens such as pollen and therefore help reduce symptoms. Adults and children will benefit from nasal douching as preparation to clean the nose before using a steroid nasal spray. This is also useful after being exposed to airborne allergens in everyday activities.

**Over-the-Counter Medications:** Which medication is most effective for which symptom?

SYMPTOM	MEDICATION	EXAMPLE
Blocked nose	Steroidal nasal sprays are the most effective treatment for all nasal symptoms and may also help reduce eye symptoms. They can be used together with eye drops and antihistamine medication.	steroid nasal spray e.g. Fluticasone or Beclometasone
Itchy eyes Watery eyes	Eye drops Chromone eye drops Antihistamine tablets/syrups or eye drops	Eye drops e.g. sodium cromoglycate Oral tablets/syrups e.g. Loratidine or Cetirizine
Itchy nose Runny nose	Antihistamine tablets/ syrups or nasal sprays	Oral tablets or syrups e.g. Loratidine or Cetirizine and or nasal spray e.g. Azelastine

Nasal decongestant sprays can be used for up to five days, only occasionally, but never regularly because they cause rebound congestion which causes swelling inside the nose when the spray is no longer used.

**Steroid nasal spray treatment works best when:**

- started before symptoms usually start, early in the hayfever season
- when used regularly

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, steroid nasal sprays is the usual treatment of choice. It is advisable to avoid antihistamine tablets and treatment should always be discussed with your doctor.

Antihistamine medication will reduce symptoms of irritation but are not good at reducing a blocked nose. They can be taken as a tablet or syrup for children and also come as nasal sprays and eye drops. One dose usually works within half an hour and therefore if symptoms are mild or come and go, can be taken 'as required'. If your symptoms are continuous, you can also take this medication daily.

There are several brands of antihistamines. Non-sedating antihistamines such as Loratidine or Cetirizine, which are taken only once a day, are advised, rather than the older, cheaper ones which cause drowsiness or psychomotor retardation and can cause reduced performance in examinations or driving. Ask your pharmacist for advice. If your regular treatment is no longer effective, try switching to another brand.