

Patient information

Rhinitis

Ear Nose and Throat Department

What is Rhinitis?

- It is inflammation or irritation of the lining of the nose. In most cases it is the result of an allergic reaction in your nose.
- Rhinitis is not life threatening, but having a blocked nose can affect the quality of your life by disturbing your sleep.

Symptoms

Symptoms include sneezing, itchy, blocked or runny nose. The eyes and throat may also be affected.

There are three types of Rhinitis

- **Seasonal allergic rhinitis (also known as hay fever).** The pollen from grass, weeds or trees can cause this. The symptoms usually decrease with the cold weather.
- **Perennial rhinitis**
Symptoms are present all the year round. The causes often found indoors, include house dust mite, animal dander (dandruff), mould spores and feathers.
- **Vasomotor rhinitis or non-allergic rhinitis**
Symptoms are caused by a disorder of the nasal reflexes. This is the response of the lining of the nose to such things as smoke, aerosols, perfumes and temperature changes.

Treatment

- Treatment may include a blood test to see if you have any allergies.
- The doctor may prescribe a nasal spray or antihistamines.
- Trying to reduce contact with the substance you are allergic to is also important.

Useful information

Seasonal rhinitis

- Avoid open grassy places if the pollen count is high. Use a pollen filter in the car.
- Wash hair and clothes frequently.
- Dry clothes indoors or in a dryer not on the line.

Perennial rhinitis

- Pay particular attention to the bedroom.
- Ventilate your house.
- Avoid contact with furry or feathered pets; do not let them sleep in the bedroom.
- Keep surfaces free of clutter and damp dust the furniture regularly.
- Use synthetic bedding with dust-proof mattress and pillow covers.
- Air bedding if possible.
- Wash bed linen frequently once a week using a hot wash; 50 – 60oC.
- Avoid furry toys in the bedroom.
- Remove carpets if possible and have solid floors; for example laminate flooring.
- Vacuum the mattress, carpets and curtains thoroughly using a cleaner with an efficient filter if possible.

Non-allergic rhinitis

Avoid substances, which cause the problem; for example avoid smoky rooms.

Important

Do not become obsessed about avoidance or cleaning. Lead as normal a life as possible you will never remove or avoid all allergens in the home or in the air around you.

Further information

For further information, please speak to your hospital doctor, your clinic nurse or your practice nurse/family doctor (GP).

ENT Nurse Practitioners

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