

Aelfgar Newsletter

Prepared by Aelfgar Patient Participation Group

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Dr Davies April -July

Medical Students from August
2019

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Lisa Allman – Practice
Pharmacist – Minor Ailments

Practice Nurses

Easter Closing



HAYFEVER – Helpful advice by Practice Pharmacist Lisa Allman

What is Hay fever?

Hay fever is caused by an allergy to pollen and affects about 2 in 10 people in the UK. Symptoms often return between March and September each year. It is often common to also suffer with asthma and/or eczema too if you get hay fever.

What are the symptoms?

- **Common symptoms:-**
 - A runny nose or a blocked nose.
 - An itchy nose.
 - Sneezing.
 - Itchy and watery red eyes.
 - An itchy throat.
- **Less common symptoms:-**
 - Loss of smell.
 - Face pain.
 - Sweats.
 - Headache.
- **Asthma symptoms** – if you already have asthma, symptoms such as wheeze and breathlessness may get worse.

Will it help if I avoid pollen?

It is impossible to avoid pollen totally. However, symptoms tend to be less severe if you reduce your exposure to pollen. Stay indoors as much as possible and keep windows and doors shut.

Easter Closing

Good Friday 19th and Easter
Monday 22nd April.

If you require medical
assistance over the Bank
Holiday please Call 111

- Avoid cutting grass, large grassy places and camping.
- Shower and wash your hair after being outdoors, especially after going to the countryside.
- Wear wraparound sunglasses when you are out.
- Keep car windows closed and consider buying a pollen filter for the air vents in your car. These should be changed at every service.

What are the commonly used treatments?

If you are taking hay fever medication regularly and your symptoms are well controlled, you should continue this treatment until the end of the pollen season. However if there is no improvement within 2-4 weeks then you should discuss other options with your Pharmacist and try an alternative or additional treatment.

Discuss with your doctor or pharmacist if you are pregnant or breast-feeding and have hay fever before starting any medications.

The commonly used hay fever treatment options that are available for you to buy are:

- **Antihistamine tablets or liquid**

Antihistamines taken by mouth ease most of the symptoms of hayfever including itching and watering in the eyes and nose and sneezing. They are suitable for adults and children from the age of two years. A dose usually works within an hour. Therefore, one can be taken as required if symptoms come and go or can be taken regularly if symptoms occur each day.

Older antihistamines, such as chlorphenamine, cause drowsiness so avoid if you are driving or operating machinery. Newer ones that cause less drowsiness include; **Loratadine, Cetirizine or Acrivastine.**

- **Steroid nasal sprays**

These work well to clear nasal symptoms and ease eye symptoms. They are the most effective treatment when symptoms are more severe.

There is no immediate relief when you first start treatment as it can take up to three weeks for a steroid spray to build up its full effect. So do persevere. (It is best to start taking it a few weeks before the hay fever season begins, if you know that you have hay fever.) Continue to use the spray daily throughout the hayfever season if it is helping. An example is **Beclometasone** nasal spray.

- **Eye drops**

- **Sodium Cromoglicate** eye drops. You need to use them regularly to prevent itchy and watery eye symptoms. They can be used throughout the hay fever season if you need to.
- **Antihistamine eye drops** work quickly, so you can use them as required to ease a flare-up of eye symptoms. You can also use them regularly if needed but only for a maximum of six weeks at a time. There are several different ones including **Antazoline.**

Please look at the **Aelfgar Website** for lots of further help and information. It includes the ability to book appointments, order prescriptions, complete the Friends and Family Test and links to safe medical Information/Resource.

The **Patient Group** needs more patient opinion and help – we only ask a couple of hours every 2-3 months if you are interested then ask at reception for the next meeting date