



## MANAGEMENT OF HAY FEVER MARCH TO SEPTEMBER 2019

Tree pollen is released between March and September and affects 25% of sufferers; grass pollen, which affects 90% of sufferers, is released from May to late July; and fungal spores are released until September.

Oral antihistamines, intranasal corticosteroids and antihistamine eye drops are the usual treatment options for hay fever.

**First line treatments for the management of hay fever are available to purchase over the counter. All patients must be advised to purchase these treatments; an NHS prescription must NOT be issued for products available over the counter (OTC).**

### Oral antihistamines

- Oral antihistamines relieve ocular symptoms, rhinorrhoea, sneezing and nasal irritation but most have little effect on nasal congestion.
- They have a more rapid onset of action than intranasal corticosteroids and can be taken when required - although they are best taken regularly.
- First generation antihistamines (also known as sedating antihistamines), such as chlorpheniramine, tend to cause sedation and antimuscarinic side effects, such as dry mouth.
- Second and third generation antihistamines (also known as non-sedating antihistamines) are less likely to cause sedation, although 2-23% of patients taking these drugs complain of sedation.
- Non-sedating antihistamines are the agents of choice for most patients

### Choice of non-sedating antihistamine

There is little evidence to confirm whether, in practice, third generation antihistamines (e.g. desloratadine or levocetirizine) confer any benefit over second generation agents; they should be reserved for patients who cannot tolerate, or have not responded to other therapies.

	Non-sedating antihistamine (adult dose)	Cost for 30 days treatment (Drug tariff May 2019)
<b>First line treatments</b> (must be purchased OTC)	Cetirizine (10mg od)	£0.86
	Loratadine (10mg od)	£0.71
<b>Second line treatments</b>	Desloratadine (5mg od)	£1.25
	Levocetirizine (5mg od)	£3.12
	Fexofenadine (120mg od)	£1.77

**Liquid antihistamines are more expensive, reserve for patients who cannot swallow tablets.**

Non-sedating antihistamine liquid (adult dose)	Cost for 30 days treatment
Cetirizine solution 5mg/5ml (10ml od) (must be purchased OTC)	£1.68
Loratadine 5mg/5ml oral solution (10ml od) (must be purchased OTC)	£4.65
Levocetirizine 500mcg/ml (10ml od)	£9.00
Desloratadine 2.5mg/5ml oral solution (10ml od)	£19.76

### Intranasal corticosteroids

Intranasal corticosteroids are the treatment of choice in patients with moderate to severe hay fever, as they can relieve all symptoms including nasal congestion.

<b>Corticosteroid Nasal Spray and recommended doses</b>	<b>Cost for <u>30 days</u> treatment at recommended dose (Drug Tariff May 2019)</b>
Beclometasone 50mcg/dose aqueous nasal spray- 2 sprays into each nostril twice daily <b>(must be purchased OTC for adults over the age of 18)</b>	<b>£3.62</b> (NB: The 200 dose spray, will last 25 days if used at the recommended dose)
Mometasone 50mcg/dose nasal spray- 2 sprays into each nostril once daily <b>(must be purchased OTC for adults over the age of 18)</b>	<b>£1.46</b> (NB: The 140 dose spray, will last 35 days if used at the recommended dose)
Budesonide 64mcg/dose nasal spray- 2 sprays into each nostril once daily <b>(must be purchased OTC for adults over the age of 18)</b>	<b>£4.77</b> (NB: The 120 dose spray, will last 30 days if used at the recommended dose)
Fluticasone furoate 27.5mg/dose nasal spray (Avamys®)- 2 sprays into each nostril once daily	<b>£6.44</b> (NB: The 120 dose spray, this will last 30 days if used at the recommended dose)
Triamcinolone acetonide 55mcg/dose (Nasacort®)- 2 sprays into each nostril once daily <b>(must be purchased OTC for adults over the age of 18)</b>	<b>£7.39</b> (NB: The 120 dose spray, this will last 30 days if used at the recommended dose)
Fluticasone propionate 50mcg/dose nasal spray (Flixonase®)- 2 sprays into each nostril once daily (must be purchased OTC)	<b>£5.80</b> (NB: The 150 dose spray, this will last 37.5 days if used at the recommended dose)

### Anti-inflammatory eye drops

These work quickly and are suitable for patients with frequent eye symptoms.

<b>Eye Drops</b>	<b>Cost for 30 days treatment (Drug Tariff May 2019)</b>
Sodium cromoglicate 2% eye drops x 13.5ml <b>(first line choice – 10ml must be purchased OTC for adults and children over 6 years)</b>	<b>£10.09</b>

### Kenalog®

Kenalog® is not recommended for the management of hay fever symptoms within Telford & Wrekin CCG.

There is uncertainty about the efficacy and safety of repeated administration of this product. No new data has been published to change the conclusions of the DTB review in 1999 (Any place for depot triamcinolone in hay fever? DTB 1999: 37(3): 17-18) – this stated that ‘Until there is clear evidence of its advantages over other hay fever treatments, including oral prednisolone, use of depot injections of triamcinolone is no longer acceptable.

### Grazax®

Grazax® is not routinely commissioned by Telford & Wrekin CCG. Please refer to the CCG’s policy which can be accessed via our website: [T&W CCG Clinical Commissioning Policies](#)

### Prescribing in children

- Consider whether a liquid antihistamine is still indicated (is the child old enough to manage a tablet formulation?). If a liquid is required, cetirizine 5mg/5ml oral solution is a cost effective choice.
- Sodium cromoglicate is a suitable eye drop preparation.
- Beclomethasone 50mcg/dose aqueous nasal spray is suitable from 6 years of age if a steroid nasal spray is required.