Allergies

How to Approach a Seasonal Problem

Types of Nasal Corticosteroids
1. Triamcinolone Acetonide (Nasacort)
2. Fluticasone (Veramyst, Flonase)
3. Mometasone Furoate Monohydrate (Nasonex)
4. Budesonide (Rhinocort)

Antihistamines (continued)
3. Loratadine (Claritin, generic brands)
   - Pros: Non-drowsy, great for daytime use
   - Cons: May cause dry mouth
4. Fexofenadine (Allegra, generic brands)
   - Pros: Also non-drowsy
   - Cons: May cause dry mouth

Eye Drop Antihistamines
1. Ketotifen (Alaway, Zaditor)
   - Pros: Excellent for red, itchy eyes
   - Cons: Doesn’t help the other symptoms

Nasal Spray Antihistamines
1. Azelastine (Astelin, Astepro)
   - Pros: Faster action, targets symptoms directly
   - Cons: May cause headaches, nasal burning, sneezing, and nosebleeds
2. Olopatadine (Patanase)
   - Pros/cons: Same as Azelastine

Corticosteroids
Corticosteroids are the strongest over the counter treatments available for people suffering from allergies. They should only be used if the above treatments have failed.

Nasal Corticosteroids
All of these drugs have excellent symptom relief but users may not see any effect until up to 2 weeks after starting the drug. They may cause nosebleeds, dry nose, or sneezing.

Generic Vs. Brand Names
Generic medications are required by law to have the same amount of the same active ingredient as a brand name medication (for example Allertec vs. brand name Allegra). This means that often you can get the same drug for a cheaper price if you use a store’s generic medicine instead of a drug company’s brand name medicine.

If Treatment Fails
Unfortunately, not everyone responds to treatment in the same way. If symptoms continue after trying these medications it may be time to schedule a visit with an Allergist, a doctor trained specifically to deal with difficult allergies.

If you need help locating an Allergist, contact your primary care physician or visit online www.ACAAI.org.
**What are Allergies?**

Seasonal Allergies (a.k.a. Allergic Rhinitis) are a condition where a particular molecule, or allergen, triggers your body’s immune system. They can be caused by many different things but the most common allergens in Vermont are:

- Animal dander
- Tree pollen (April through June)
- Grass (May through July)
- Ragweed (August and September)
- Dust Mites
- Cockroaches

**What can I do to Prevent Allergies?**

- Keep windows and doors closed during the months when allergens are high
- Clean mold with bleach
- Use HEPA filters for small allergens like mold, pollen, animal dander
- Avoid animal contact (there is no such thing as a hypoallergenic animal)
- Clean clothes and bedding regularly to rid it of dust mites

---

### Treatment Options

**Nasal rinses**

The only non-drug treatment recommended for runny noses, nasal rinses are a good first option for people whose main concern is a stuffy nose. But do make sure to follow the directions closely!

**Anti-histamines**

These are usually the first medicines used for mild to moderate allergy symptoms. They come in three varieties: oral pills, eye drops, and nasal sprays.

**Oral Anti-histamines**

1. Diphenhydramine (Benadryl, generic brand)
   - Pros: Fast acting, good choice for night time allergies
   - Cons: Will make you sleepy!
2. Cetirizine (Zyrtec, generic brands)
   - Pros: Less sleepiness than diphenhydramine
   - Cons: Will still make you sleepy!

(Continued on back)