

Allergies Formulary

Formulary prepared and based on information found in the BNF (current version at time of formulary issue) and individual drug Summary of Product Characteristics. This formulary should be used in conjunction with national guidelines.

NHS England Guidance on conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care

In the year prior to June 2017, the NHS spent approximately £569 million on prescriptions for medicines which can be purchased over the counter from a pharmacy and other outlets such as supermarkets.

These prescriptions include items for a condition:

That is considered to be **self-limiting** and so does not need treatment as it will heal of its own accord;

Which lends itself to **self-care**, i.e. that the person suffering does not normally need to seek medical care but may decide to seek help with symptom relief from a local pharmacy and use an over the counter medicine.

How does the guidance apply to this formulary? For full information see: [NHSE Guidance to CCGs](#)

A quick reference guide for professionals is also available which contains hyperlinks to the conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care.

[Quick reference guide Link - please add to your desktop as a useful resource.](#)

A summary of recommendations relating to this formulary are shown below

Mild to Moderate Hay fever/Seasonal Rhinitis

Recommendation Advise CCGs that a prescription for treatment of mild to moderate hay fever will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.

Insect bites and stings

Recommendation Advise CCGs that a prescription for treatment for insect bites and stings will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.

Self Care

Self-care should be encouraged as.

The self care forum states:

Empowering people with the confidence and information to look after themselves when they can, and visit the GP when they need to, gives people greater control of their own health and encourages healthy behaviours that help prevent ill health in the long-term. People can often take care of themselves when they have common symptoms such as sore throats, coughs etc, for example by using over-the-counter medicines.

In addition, this will potentially help to reduce pressure on the NHS resources allowing re-direction to areas of greatest need.

NOTE: Caution should be exercised when encouraging self-care for patients to ensure that patient needs can be encompassed within the over the counter sales licensing of the medicine required.

[See the self care forum website](#) for further information and resources.

For a list of suggested self care medications to treat hayfever symptoms please see Appendix Two

Management of Allergic Rhinitis - [see CKS Guidelines](#)

Management of Allergic Conjunctivitis - Seasonal or Perennial - [see CKS Guidelines](#)

British Society for Allergy & Clinical Immunology (BSACI) primary Care Guidelines - [see for further information](#)

One of the BSACI's main activities is the formulation of National Guidelines for use by allergy specialists. NICE has accredited the process used by the BSACI to produce its patient management guidelines. Accreditation is valid from 2010 until 2018.



Formulary Key

1st line formulary choice		Encouraged
Alternative formulary choice		On Formulary
2nd line formulary choice		2nd Line
Shared Care (TAG Amber)		Shared Care Agreement


3.4.1 Antihistamines

Non - sedating Antihistamines


BNF Statement: "Although drowsiness is rare, nevertheless patients should be advised that it can occur and may affect performance of skilled tasks (eg driving); excess alcohol should be avoided".

Drug		Formulations	Dose	Notes	
First Line					
CETIRIZINE (Generic)		T:	10mg	Adults & children over 12 years 10mg daily.	Available to purchase over the counter - self care should be encouraged SPC caution: reduce dose in renal impairment
		L:	5mg/5ml	Child 6-12 years 5mg twice daily. Child 2-6 years 2.5mg twice daily.	
LORATADINE (Generic)		T:	10mg	Adult & children over 12 years 10mg daily	Available to purchase over the counter - self care should be encouraged
		L:	5mg/5ml	Child: 2-12 years Body weight under 30kg 5mg once daily	
				Child: 2-12 years Body weight over 30kg 10mg once daily	

Sedating Antihistamine


CHLORPHENAMINE (Generic)		T:	4mg	Children aged 6 - 12 years: ½ tablet 4 to 6 hourly. Maximum daily dose: 3 tablets (12mg) in any 24 hours	Available to purchase over the counter - self care should be encouraged The elderly are more likely to experience neurological anticholinergic effects. Contraindicated with MAOIs
				Adult and children over 12 4mg 4-6 hrly (max: 24mg/24hrs)	
		L:	2mg/5ml	Not recommended under 1yr Child: 1-2 years 1mg twice daily 2-6 years 1mg every 4-6 hours - (max 6mg daily) 6-12 years 2mg every 4-6 hours - (max 12mg daily)	

3.4.3 Allergic Emergencies


ADRENALINE (EPINEPHRINE) Emerade ®		IM Inj	150 microgram	Patients 15 - 30kg in weight One injection when anaphylaxis symptoms present. Another dose 5 - 15 minutes later if deterioration or no clinical improvement.	Emergency use for anaphylaxis - Emerade ® is currently recommended as the most effective choice for new patients. It has approximately double the use by date compared to other brands. Existing patients should be prescribed the brand they have been trained to use. MHRA 2014 See link below. Adrenaline Autoinjector Advice for healthcare professionals: •Ensure that people with allergies and their carers have been trained to use the particular auto-injector that they have been prescribed. Injection technique varies between injectors. •Encourage people with allergies and their carers to obtain and practise using a trainer device (available for free from the manufacturers' websites). Advice to give to people with allergies and their carers: •Carry TWO adrenaline auto-injectors at all times. This is particularly important for people who also have allergic asthma as they are at increased risk of a severe anaphylactic reaction. MHRA Drug Safety Update : Adrenaline Autoinjectors - Advice for Patients and Healthcare Professionals.
		IM Inj	300 microgram	Patients greater than 30kg One injection when anaphylaxis symptoms present. Another dose 5 - 15 minutes later if deterioration or no clinical improvement.	
		IM Inj	500 microgram	ADULT and CHILD over 12 years at risk of severe anaphylaxis, 500 micrograms repeated after 5-15 minutes as necessary.	

11.4.2 Other Anti-inflammatory preparations for the Eye

First Choice - Mast Cell Stabiliser

SODIUM CROMOGLICATE (Generic)		Drops :	2%	Apply one or two drops in each eye 4 times daily.	Available to purchase over the counter - self care should be encouraged Ensure generic prescribing of 13.5ml pack size as much cheaper Contains Benzalkonium chloride, soft contact lenses should not be worn during treatment period.
					For use in allergic conjunctivitis and seasonal keratoconjunctivitis in adults and children.

Second Choice - Mast Cell Stabiliser and Antihistamine


OLOPATADINE (Opatanol ®)		Drops:	1mg/ml	Adult and Child over 3 years: Apply twice daily.	Seasonal allergic conjunctivitis Max duration of treatment 4 months. Side effects are uncommon. Has dual action as both a mast cell stabiliser and antihistamine. Contains Benzalkonium chloride, soft contact lenses should not be worn during treatment period.
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Otrivine-Antistinin ® – Rapid acting intermittent use antihistamine eye drop for use in patients over 12 years **can be purchased over the counter.**

12.2.1 Drugs used in Nasal Allergies

Antihistamines



For people who want an 'as-required' treatment for occasional symptoms

AZELASTINE (Rhinolast ®)		Spray:	140micrograms/ spray	Adult: one spray each nostril twice daily Child: 6 years and over - one spray each nostril twice daily	Perennial and seasonal allergic rhinitis. Useful for controlling breakthrough symptoms in allergic rhinitis Not recommended for children under 6 years
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Corticosteroids

For people who want preventive treatment to control more frequent or persistent symptoms - NICE CKS

First Choice

BECLOMETASONE DIPROPIONATE (Generic)		Spray:	Aqueous nasal spray 50 micrograms/spray	Adult & Child over 6 years 100 micrograms (2 sprays) each nostril twice daily. Max total 400 micrograms (8 sprays) daily. When symptoms controlled, dose reduced to (1 spray) into each nostril twice daily.	Not recommended for children under 6 years Available to purchase as over the counter (OTC) – but DO NOT prescribe as OTC Beconase Hay fever ® as this is expensive on FP10. Please prescribe 200 dose pack - currently cheaper than 180 dose. Minimum dose should be used at which effective control of symptoms is maintained.
MOMETASONE FUROATE		Spray	50 microgram per dose pump nasal spray, 140-dose unit	Rhinitis, Child 3—11 years, 1 spray in each nostril once daily. Adults & Adolescent 12 years and over: 2 sprays in each nostril once daily, increasing to 4 sprays in each nostril once daily if necessary. Reduce to 1 spray in each nostril once daily when controlled.	Not recommended for children under 3 years. The patient should continue regular use to achieve full therapeutic benefit.

Second Choice

TRIAMCINOLONE (Nasacort ®)		Spray	55 microgram per dose pump nasal spray, 120-dose unit	Paediatric patients aged 6 to 12 years: The recommended dose is 110 micrograms as 1 spray in each nostril once daily. In patients with more severe symptoms, a dose of 220 micrograms may be used. But once symptoms are controlled, patients should be maintained on the lowest effective dose Patients aged 12 years and over: The recommended starting dose is 220 micrograms as 2 sprays in each nostril once daily. Once symptoms are controlled patients can be maintained on 110 micrograms (1 spray in each nostril once daily)	Continuous use beyond three months in children is not recommended. Available OTC for 18 years and over.
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Treatment Options for Hay Fever

Intermittent mild symptoms

Intermittent or regular oral antihistamines are a good first choice.

Intranasal antihistamines have a faster onset of action.

Intermittent moderate to severe symptoms

Intermittent or regular oral or nasal antihistamines.

Intranasal corticosteroids or decongestants ease nasal congestion.

Intranasal decongestants can be used short-term to relieve congestion and allow penetration of an intranasal corticosteroid. Available OTC

Persistent moderate to severe symptoms

Intranasal corticosteroids are the first-choice treatment.

Intranasal decongestants can be used short-term to relieve congestion and allow penetration of an intranasal corticosteroid.

If symptoms remain uncontrolled, increase the corticosteroid dose or use a different one.

If itching and sneezing are troublesome, an antihistamine can be used.

If **non-allergic** watery rhinorrhoea is the predominant symptom, try intranasal ipratropium Rinattec®.

If symptoms continue to be poorly controlled, consider a short course of oral corticosteroids.

If eye symptoms predominate

Oral antihistamines can be taken intermittently or regularly.

Intraocular antihistamines are an alternative and act more rapidly; they may be preferable for intermittent use. Otrivine- Antisitin® can be bought over the counter.

Intraocular sodium cromoglicate can also be used for prophylaxis or persistent eye symptoms.

CKS Classification of allergic rhinitis: -

Intermittent – symptoms occur less than 4 days a week for less than 4 weeks.

Persistent – symptoms occur more than 4 days per week and for more than 4 weeks.

Mild – symptoms are not troublesome and normal activities, such as sleep, sport, leisure, work and school, are unaffected.

Moderate – symptoms are troublesome and one or more of the following occur: impairment of normal activities, such as sport, leisure, work and school; disturbed sleep.



Hayfever (Seasonal allergic rhinitis)

Hayfever is a common condition also known as seasonal allergic rhinitis and affects around 1 in 5 people in the UK. It often runs in families and is more likely to affect people who suffer from asthma and eczema.

It is an allergic condition where the body's immune system overreacts to substances that are usually harmless, for example pollen from grasses, flowers, weeds or trees. The pollen causes the release of a chemical called histamine from cells in the nose, eyes and airways, which cause inflammation. Some people suffer symptoms all year round; they can be allergic to indoor allergens such as house dust mites, pets and indoor moulds. This is called perennial allergic rhinitis.

Symptoms include:

Sneezing - Itchy, blocked or runny nose - Red, itchy, puffy or watery eyes - Itchy throat - Headaches and sinus pain - Fatigue

Managing your hayfever

The severity of symptoms can vary, some people need medication to manage their symptoms and others can manage their condition by avoiding triggers. If treatment is needed a wide range of medications can be purchased from community pharmacies and supermarkets without seeing a doctor. These medicines are often cheaper than medicines on prescription.

How can I avoid triggers?

- Keep house and car windows closed, especially when the pollen count is high (early morning between 7am to 9am and evenings between 5pm and 7pm).
- Avoid large grassy areas, woodland, cutting the grass, pollutants and car fumes.
- Wear wrap-around sunglasses.
- When you get in from outside wash your hands, face, hair, rinse your eyes and change your clothes.
- If possible stay indoors when the pollen count is high.
- Use petroleum jelly inside your nose to block inhalation of pollen.
- Keep your house clean and wear a mask and glasses when doing house work.
- Don't dry washing outside to avoid pollen sticking to your clothes.
- You could buy a pollen filter for the air vents in the car.

What treatments can I buy?

Speak to a local pharmacist to get advice on the best treatment for your symptoms and always read the patient information leaflet that is included with the medicine.

Examples of products available to buy include:

<p>Antihistamine tablets and syrup</p> <p>Generally effective at controlling symptoms of hayfever.</p>	<p>Antihistamines are more effective if they are taken before symptoms start rather than after. Some older antihistamine tablets such as chlorphenamine can cause drowsiness.</p> <p>Newer antihistamines are unlikely to cause drowsiness and include cetirizine, loratadine, and acrivastine. If you drive or operate machinery ask the community pharmacist which tablets would be best for you.</p>
<p>Nasal sprays</p> <p>Useful if you suffer nasal symptoms and can be used instead of, or in addition to, antihistamine tablets.</p>	<p>Steroid nasal sprays suppress the allergic reaction and inflammation of hayfever and take about 3 days to work. They are best started before the hayfever season begins and used throughout the season even if your symptoms have improved.</p> <p>Antihistamine nasal sprays can be useful for people who have symptoms now and again.</p> <p>Nasal decongestant sprays are useful if you suffer from a blocked nose, however they can only be used for 7 days as longer use can cause rebound congestion and block your nose up again. You may find inhalants (eucalyptus, menthol and Olbas Oil) helpful to ease blocked and stuffy noses.</p>
<p>Eye drops</p>	<p>If your eye symptoms are not controlled by oral antihistamines, eye drops containing sodium cromoglicate or lodoxamide may be useful.</p> <p>If you wear contact lenses you should check with a community pharmacist or your optician before using eye drops.</p>
<p>Other useful treatments</p>	<p>Simple pain relief (e.g. paracetamol or ibuprofen) can help with headaches and sinus pain. Throat lozenges can help ease tickly throats and palates. Decongestant tablets should relieve blocked noses.</p>

When should I see a GP?

- If you are experiencing wheezing, breathlessness or tightness in the chest.
- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- If your symptoms are not relieved by over the counter treatments in combination with measures to reduce your exposure to pollen.

More information is available at:



<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Hay-fever/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/hayfever/Pages/Hayfeverhome.aspx>

<http://www.patient.co.uk/health/hay-fever>

Intended as a reference for healthcare professionals only
Not to be given to patients

Over The Counter Hayfever Drugs including sales restrictions



Information Key	
1st line choice	 Encouraged
Alternative choice	 On Formulary
Not on formulary	X Non-Formulary
General Sale List	[GSL] GSL
Pharmacy Only Medicine	(P) P-Med

! Range and price is up to date as per Jul-2018
! Dose and age restrictions may apply for OTC formulations

Antihistamines


Non-sedating Antihistamines

BNF Statement: "Although drowsiness is rare, nevertheless patients should be advised that it can occur and may affect performance of skilled tasks (e.g. driving); excess alcohol should be avoided".

First line	Status	Formulation	Dose	Availability	Cautions	Indicative price
Cetirizine (generic)		10mg tablet	Adults & children over 12 years 10mg daily Child 6-12 years 5mg (half tab) twice daily	7, 14, 30, tabs [GSL] 70m [GSL] 100ml (P) 60 tabs (P)	SPC caution: reduce dose in renal impairment OTC sale restrictions: Tablets not for under 6 years. Liquid not for under 2 years	Pack size/cost: 7 tablets: £ 1.00 14 tablets £ 1.50 30 tablets £ 2.50 60 tablets £ 11.49
		1mg/1ml liquid	Adults & children over 12 years 10mg daily Child 6-12 years 5mg twice daily Child 2-6 years 2.5mg twice	Widely available in pharmacies and supermarkets		Pack size/cost: 70ml pack £ 5.00 100ml pack £ 5.99
Loratadine (generic)		10mg tablet	Adults & children over 2 years with body weight > 30kg 10mg daily	7, 14, 30, tabs [GSL] 70ml [GSL] 60 tabs (P)	OTC sale restrictions: Tablets and Liquid not for under 2 years	Pack size/cost: 7 tablets: £ 1.00 14 tablets £ 1.50 30 tablets £ 2.50 60 tablets £ 11.49
		1mg/1ml liquid	Adults & children over 2 years with body weight > 30kg 10mg daily Child 2-12 years with body weight < 30kg 5mg once daily.	Widely available in pharmacies and supermarkets		Pack size/cost: 70ml pack £ 5.00
Acrivastine (Generic)	X	8mg capsule	Adults & children over 12 years 8mg up to three times daily	12, 24 Caps [GSL] 48 Caps (P) Available in pharmacies and supermarkets	SPC caution: not recommended for use in the elderly and in significant renal impairment OTC sale restrictions: Tablets and Liquid not for under 12 years or for over 65 years.	Pack size/cost: 12 capsules £ 4.79 24 capsules £ 8.99 48 capsules £ 16.99 (Brands include Benadryl®)


Antihistamines

Sedating Antihistamines

First line	Status	Formulation	Dose	Availability	Cautions	Indicative price
Chlorphenamine (Generic)		4mg tablet	Adults & children over 12 years 4mg every 4-6 hours (max 24mg/24hrs) Child 6 - 12 years 2mg (½ tablet) every 4 to 6 hours. (max 12mg daily) Elderly: maximum 12mg / 24 hours.	(P) Widely available in pharmacies only	The elderly are more likely to experience neurological anticholinergic effects. Contraindicated with MAOIs OTC sale restrictions: Tablets and Liquid not for under 1 years.	Pack size/cost: 30 tablets £ 2.99 60 tablets £ 5.89 (Brands include Piriton®)
		2mg/5ml liquid	Not recommended <1yr Child: 1-2 years 1mg twice daily Child: 2-6 years 1mg every 4-6 hours - (max 6mg daily) Child: 6-12 years 2mg every 4-6 hours - (max 12mg daily)			Pack size/cost: 150ml pack £3.79 (Brands include Piriton®)

Anti-inflammatory preparations for the Eye

Mast cell stabiliser

First line	Status	Formulation	Dose	Availability	Cautions	Indicative price
Sodium Cromoglycate (Generic)		2% eye drops	Apply one or two drops in each eye 4 times daily	[GSL] Widely available in pharmacies and supermarkets	Contains Benzalkonium chloride, avoid with soft contact lenses OTC sale restrictions: not for under 6 years.	Pack size/cost: 5ml pack £ 4.09 10ml pack £ 4.99 (Brands include Opticrom allergy®) (Preservative Free preparation also available (P) 20 Unit dose £5.99)

Antihistamine / decongestant

First line	Status	Formulation	Dose	Availability	Cautions	Indicative price
Antazoline 0.5% and Xylometazoline 0.05% (Otrivine-Antistin®)	X	eye drops	Adult & Child over 12 years 1-2 drops two to three times daily (Rapid acting, for intermittent use)	(P) Available in pharmacies only	Contraindicated with MAOIs Not to be used in narrow angle glaucoma Contains Benzalkonium chloride, avoid with soft contact lenses OTC sale restrictions: not for under 12 years.	Pack size/cost: 10ml pack £ 5.50

Drugs used in Nasal Allergies

Corticosteroids						
First line	Status	Formulation	Dose	Availability	Cautions	Indicative price
Beclometa- sone (Generic)	●	50mcg/spray aqueous nasal spray	Adult over 18 years 100 mcg (2 sprays) each nostril twice daily. Max total 400 mcg (8 sprays) daily <i>Maintenance dose:</i> (1 spray) into each nostril twice daily	100 spray [GSL] 180 spray (P) Available in pharmacies and supermarkets	Minimum dose should be used at which effective control of symptoms is maintained. OTC sale restrictions: not for under 18 years.	Pack size/cost: 100 sprays £ 5.00 180 sprays £ 9.39 (Brands include Beconase hayfever®)
Fluticasone (Generic)	X	50mcg/spray nasal spray	Adult over 18 years 100 mcg (2 sprays) each nostril daily. Max total 200 mcg daily (2 sprays twice daily) <i>Maintenance dose:</i> (1 spray) into each nostril once a day	(P) Available in pharmacies only	Minimum dose should be used at which effective control of symptoms is maintained. OTC sale restrictions: not for under 18 years.	Pack size/cost: 60 sprays £ 6.59 (Brands include Pirinase Allergy®)
Triamcino-lone (Generic)	X	55mcg/spray nasal spray	Adult over 18 years 110 mcg (2 sprays) each nostril daily. <i>Maintenance dose:</i> (1 spray) into each nostril once a day	(P) Available in <u>some</u> pharmacies only	Minimum dose should be used at which effective control of symptoms is maintained. OTC sale restrictions: not for under 18 years.	Pack size/cost: 30 sprays £ 5.99 (Brands include Nasacort®)
Topical decongestant						
Max use 7 days, preferably for controlling nighttime nasal congestion						
First line	Status	Formulation	Dose	Availability	Cautions	Indicative price
Xylometazo- line (Generic)	X	0.1% spray nasal spray	Adults & children over 12 years spray once in each nostril 1- 3 times daily	[GSL] Widely available in pharmacies and supermarkets	MAX USE: 7 consecutive days (risk of rebound congestion)	Pack size/cost: 10ml spray £ 3.50 (Brands include Otrivine®)
		0.1% drop nasal drops	Adults & children over 12 years Use 2-3 drops in each nostril 2-3 times daily			Pack size/cost: 10ml drops £ 3.49 (Brands include Otrivine®)
		0.05% drop child nasal drops	Children 6-12 years Use 1-2 drops in each nostril 1-2 times daily (Max 2 doses in 24 h)	(P) Available in pharmacies only	CHILD DROPS: MAX USE: 5 consecutive days	Pack size/cost: 10ml drops £ 3.69 (Brands include Otrivine child®)
Oxymetazo- line (Generic)	X	0.05% spray nasal spray	Adults & children over 12 years 1-2 sprays into each nostril, 6-8 hourly	[GSL] Widely available in pharmacies and supermarkets	MAX USE: 7 consecutive days (risk of rebound congestion)	Pack size/cost: 15ml spray £ 1.50 (Brands include Vicks®)

Normal saline solution						
Saline solution (Generic)	X	0.9% sodium chloride sprays/drops	Most preparations suitable from birth (but check product specifications) Apply several times per day as required	[GSL] Widely available in pharmacies and supermarkets		Pack size/cost: Various preparations £ 2.00 - £ 7.29

Systemic Decongestant						
Intended for short-term use only						
First line	Status	Formulation	Dose	Availability	Cautions	Indicative price
Pseudoephedrine (Generic)	X	60mg tablet	Adults & children over 12 years ONE every 4-6 hours up to 4 times a day	(P) Available in pharmacies only	OTC sale restrictions: Product or combination of products sold <u>must</u> no contain more than 720mg of pseudoephedrine (usually 1 pack)	Pack size/cost: 12 tablets £3.55 (Brands include Sudafed®)
		30mg tablet	Adults & children over 12 years ONE to TWO every 4-6 hours (Please refer to product for MAX daily dose)			Pack size/cost: 15 tablets £ 4.99 18 tablets £ 4.49 24 tablets £ 6.39 Brands include: Sinutab® (contains paracetamol) Sudafed sinus® (contains ibuprofen)
		30mg/5ml liquid	Adults & children over 12 years 10ml every 4-6 hours (Max 4 doses in 24 h) Children 6-12 years 5ml every 4-6 hours (Max 4 doses in 24 h)			Pack size/cost: 100ml pack £ 4.49 (Brands include Sudafed®)

Title	Over The Counter Hayfever Drugs
References	Allergies Formulary - 2018 Range of prices form well known supermarkets and pharmacies, as per Jul-2018