

Hay Fever



WYCOMBE
ABBEY

Hay fever season is soon approaching, we welcome the warmer weather and the sunshine but as the seasons change many of our girls, around one in five, will begin to suffer with itchy, red, runny eyes, blocked, runny noses, itchy throat, nose and ears, coughing and frequent sneezing.

Hay fever is an allergic reaction to pollen; either grass, tree or weed. The protein in the pollen can cause the nose, throat, eyes, sinuses to become irritated and inflamed and asthma symptoms may become worse.

Obviously avoiding the pollen is the most effective way to ease hay fever, but here are some top tips for your daughters when they can't:

- Check the pollen count each day, avoid areas where that pollen count is higher.
- Pollen can get trapped in your hair and in your clothes. Change clothing after being outside and shower; even just rinsing your hair with water can help.
- Use Vaseline or coconut oil around the nostrils to trap pollen and alleviate the symptoms.
- Reduce caffeine intake as histamine in caffeine can make symptoms worse.
- If hay fever leaves you congested, with a blocked nose or ears, try reducing dairy intake as this makes phlegm thicker.
- Avoid sugar highs as these can trigger a surge in adrenaline that activates histamine and can worsen symptoms.
- Vitamin C is a natural antihistamine. Increase this in your diet with strawberries, oranges, broccoli, potatoes, or take a supplement.
- Histamines cause inflammation, so increase anti-inflammatory foods in your diet. Some good examples are: blueberries, blackberries, purple grapes, blackcurrants, carrots, sweet potato, pumpkin, butternut squash, mango, apricots, peaches, nectarines, papaya, pears, pineapples, prunes, plums, raisins, figs, avocado, herring, pilchards, sardines, salmon, pumpkinseed oil, flaxseed oil, turmeric.
- Take a daily antihistamine (the non-drowsy kind) such as cetirizine. These are most effective eight to 12 hours after taking so generally best to take at dinner time/before bed each day during the whole season.

If your daughter is suffering from more acute symptoms of hay fever, there are many other medicinal products that the GP may suggest such as nasal sprays, eye drops, or stronger antihistamines.