



## Fact Sheet

### Hayfever

Hayfever affects tens of thousands of people every year. It is caused by a reaction to pollen and sometimes mould spores.

Hayfever, eczema, asthma and allergies are all linked and these tend to run in families. Therefore it is not uncommon for individuals to suffer with one or more of these at any one time.

The symptoms of hayfever will vary from person to person and in severity too. Symptoms include sneezing, runny nose, red and itchy eyes and wheezing.

Trees, plants, grass and flowers all pollinate at different times and therefore the time of year and length of time people suffer with hayfever will depend on which pollen type they are sensitive to.

**Tree pollen** tends to affect people from mid March until late May

**Grass pollen** affects people from the end of May until the beginning of August

**Weed pollen** affects people from the beginning of August until the end August

**Fungal spore** affects people from late August until the end of November

There are a variety of treatments available including oral preparations, nose sprays and eye drops.

#### Grass and tree pollen avoidance

It is impossible to avoid pollen completely but there are some things you can do to reduce your exposure.

1. Avoid being outside early in the morning or in the evening, as the pollen count is higher during these times of the day.
2. Sleep with your bedroom window closed.
3. In the car, drive with the windows shut. Some cars now have pollen filters within their ventilation systems.
4. Wear sun glasses to protect your eyes. Wrap around types are best.

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5. Don't mow the lawn - get someone else to do this for you.
6. Take holidays in coastal areas where pollen counts can be lower due to sea breezes.
7. Don't dry washing outside as pollen can be brought into the house on clothing and bedding. Instead, dry clothes inside or use a tumble dryer.
8. Spread a petroleum jelly based product around your eyes and nose - this can help to catch the pollen spores so you don't breathe them in or so they don't get in your eyes.
9. Make a note of the daily pollen forecast so that you are prepared. Better still, sign up to one of the pollen alerts by SMS text, or via an iPhone application such as the one provided by [Benadryl](#).

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