

## UPCOMING MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

Below is the editorial for the upcoming members newsletter.

This edition will be emailed to members on Thursday August 8th.

The editorial topic is Hay fever.

# Hay Fever

*As the month of August approaches many of my customers will start medications that prevent hay fever from occurring. These include eye drops to prevent eye allergies and steroid nasal sprays to prevent nasal and sinus symptoms. If you are a regular hay fever sufferer you should talk to your doctor or pharmacist about preventative medications that are available as some of them take several weeks to start to work.*

Hay fever is commonly caused by grass pollen, but can also be caused by dust mites, mould, animal hair and fur so for most it is common in the spring and early summer months but can be experienced all year.

Symptoms of hay fever can include itchy and watery eyes; itchy ears, nose and throat; sneezing, a runny nose, sometimes leading to sleeplessness, a lack of concentration, feeling tired or unwell.

Reducing your exposure to the allergens is the best way to reduce hay fever symptoms, so staying indoors on days of high pollen count, replace lawns with paved or bricked areas, smear petroleum jelly inside your nose, and wash eyes with cold water to remove pollen.

Medications that can help manage hay fever include corticosteroids nasal sprays, antihistamines, eye drops of various types, decongestant tablets and nasal sprays, nasal rinse products, and immunotherapy.

Corticosteroid nasal sprays reduce the inflammation response in the nose and if used regularly can prevent hay fever symptoms. Some patients use saline nasal sprays and washes to wash out pollen irritants, reducing symptoms with something as simple as a specially formulated salt-water solution.

Anti-histamine medications come in both sedating and non-sedating forms. Non-sedating antihistamines are the most commonly used medications used to treat hay fever. Your pharmacist can help you make an appropriate choice of these medications as some can cause drowsiness and other side effects and also interact with some medications and medical conditions.

Different types of eye drops are used to manage hay fever. These include antihistamines, mast cell stabilisers (preventative eye drops for eyes), and lubricant drops. Talk to your pharmacist about choosing the right one for you.

While tablet and nasal decongestants can provide some relief of symptoms the nasal sprays should only be used for a short period of time, and the tablets can cause side effects that interact with some medications and medical conditions.

Immunotherapy provided by a specialist allergist can also reduce the severity of hay fever and allergy symptoms for some people. Your doctor is the best person to give advice on this type of therapy.

Get prepared for the coming season by talking to your doctor or pharmacist about your hay fever management.

