

RHINITIS

Rhinitis is nasal inflammation or irritation of the sensitive nasal tissues by allergens and non-allergens. This inflammation can lead to a variety of symptoms, as outlined below. Sometimes the body can improve this inflammation by itself over several months, but often other treatment options are needed.

Symptoms

- Nasal congestion Runny nose (rhinorrhea) Open mouth breathing Snoring
- Common Allergens
- Pollens Moulds Animal dander
- Post-nasal drip Cough
- Throat clearing Bad breath
- Common Non-Allergens
- Dry air Dust Pollution

Treatment

1. Removal of the irritant - Saline sprays/rinses

Most allergens enter the body through the nose. Thus, to decrease symptoms and to prevent nasal inflammation, a saline (salt water) spray or rinse can be used to remove the allergen from the nasal tissue.

This can be done 1-2x per day as needed, depending on your symptoms and exposure to the allergen.

There are low volume saline sprays, low-flow rinses and higher flow rinses (i.e. squeeze bottles).



2. Hydration

The saline sprays/rinses help add hydration to your nose. There are also over the counter lubricating nasal gels that can be applied to your nose. Humidifiers can add humidity to the air. Either whole-house humidifiers or units placed in the bedroom can be considered.

3. Treating the nasal inflammation - Nasal steroid spray

Nasal inflammation occurs as your body's response to the allergen. It needs to be treated with a low dose nasal steroid spray (ie. Omnaris, Avamys, Nasonex, Flonase). Because these are low dose steroids, nasal steroid sprays take at least 4- 6 weeks to decrease the inflammation. For that reason, a minimum of 2 month trial is suggested.

Common side effects: nasal irritation, nose bleeds. Nosebleeds can be avoided with good technique.

Most people do not use nasal sprays correctly. The proper technique illustrated in a separate Nasal Steroid Device Technique and outlined below:

1. Use saline (salt water) spray or rinse
2. Blow your nose
3. Insert device into 1 side and aim to the outer part of your eye or ear.
4. Sniff softly only to ensure the liquid doesn't leave your nose, but not so hard that it leaves your nose into your throat area.
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 on the other side of your nose.