

The Impact of hay fever

The recent mild weather is probably responsible for the trees pollinating early, from January onwards. Trees that are known to trigger symptoms of allergic rhinitis include trees such as oak, elm, birch, ash, poplar, sycamore and cypress. Some weeds may also pollinate in the spring time.

Grass pollen is typically the main cause of late spring and early summer allergies, right about the time that examinations are taking place! But although grass pollen is at its highest at these times, allergies to it can go on through much of the year if people are mowing lawns or lying in the grass. Contact with grasses can result in itching and hives in people who are allergic to grass. For those living in towns their hay fever is further exacerbated by pollution.

Unfortunately most sports halls are located next to playing fields and these halls are used during exam time. Added to this exams take place during the summer months, leading to hot stuffy conditions, so the windows are often wide open, allowing the pollen to pour in.

What you can do to help alleviate hay fever symptoms

- Shower and wash hair regularly, and making sure clothes are washed and tumble dried regularly as pollen sticks to everything.
- If there are cats or dogs at home keep them out of the bedrooms as they can also spread pollen, and brush them regularly.
- If students are driven to school the car windows should remain closed as the pollen count can be at its highest in the morning.
- Some antihistamines can have a dehydrating effect, and it is known that concentration can be affected by even slight dehydration, so students should carry a bottle of water on them at all times.
- Students should be discouraged from sitting out on the playing fields during break times.

Some antihistamines can make you drowsy, so students taking exams should see their doctor in plenty of time and get them to prescribe sprays or treatments that don't have this effect. If they know they are going to suffer from hay fever because it happens every year then start taking the medication earlier than the symptoms begin, because by then it can be too late.