

# Self-care: Mild to Moderate Hay fever/Seasonal Rhinitis Factsheet for Medicines Optimisation Section 2023-24

## Aim:

To support patients to practice self-care and understand how to manage minor and self-limiting conditions without visiting a GP practice:

- To review patients with mild to moderate hay fever/seasonal rhinitis prescribed over the counter (OTC) preparations to manage symptoms of hay fever/ seasonal rhinitis in line with NHS England and Improvement guidance

## The self-care section asks practices to:

- Decrease the % of patients (of practice list size) prescribed self-care products to below or equal to 7.62%

## Key Messages: Self-care

- The prescribing of items available OTC for minor and self-limiting conditions is not routinely supported in South East London (SEL) in line with [NHS England and Improvement guidance](#) and the [South East London Integrated Medicines Optimisation Committee Position Statement for items available OTC for self-care](#)
- The national and local guidance for self-care applies to all patients, unless they fall under the exceptions listed in the national and local guidance. Further information regarding exceptions to self-care can be found in the [SEL self-care frequently asked questions](#).
- Patients should be encouraged to speak to a community pharmacist about self-care advice and the purchasing of OTC items. The [General Practice Community Pharmacist Consultation Service](#) (GP CPCS) can also support GP practices with this.
- OTC items are available for patients to buy in a community pharmacy as well as other outlets e.g., supermarkets and health and beauty retailers.

## Key Messages: Mild to Moderate Hay fever/Seasonal Rhinitis

- Most patients with mild to moderate hay fever/seasonal rhinitis are able to manage their symptoms with OTC preparations recommended by a community pharmacist
- Patients with mild to moderate hay fever/seasonal rhinitis can also be provided with [self-care measures](#) to help manage their symptoms alongside the use of OTC preparations
- Patients with moderate-to-severe persistent symptoms may require management of their symptoms with prescription only treatments in line with the [SEL Guideline for the Management of Allergic Rhinitis](#). However, as symptoms are seasonal; it is recommended the prescribing of such treatments are placed under “Variable use” within EMIS as opposed to “Repeat” or “Repeat dispensing”.

## Recommendations to support the self-care indicator: mild to moderate hay fever/seasonal rhinitis

Recommended Action	Supporting Resources
Identify patient’s prescribed hay fever preparations available OTC ( <i>e.g., oral antihistamines, steroid nasal spray, and sodium cromoglicate eye drops</i> ) for the management of mild to moderate hay fever/seasonal rhinitis using the <a href="#">EMIS mild to moderate hay fever and seasonal rhinitis search (M0159)</a> and review if any appropriate patients can be advised to purchase the medicines OTC	<a href="#">SEL Guideline for the Management of Allergic Rhinitis</a> <a href="#">NICE CKS: Allergic rhinitis</a>

## References

- Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs, NHS England and Improvement. March 2018 <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/conditions-for-which-over-the-counter-items-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-guidance-for-ccgs/>
- South East London Integrated Medicines Optimisation Committee Position Statement for items available OTC for self-care. February 2019 <https://selondonccg.nhs.uk/download/11683/>
- Community Pharmacy Consultation Service web page, SEL CCG. <https://selondonccg.nhs.uk/healthcare-professionals/primary-care/lambeth/community-pharmacy-consultation-service-cpcs/>
- Self-care: Frequently asked questions about changes to prescribing of over the counter (OTC) medicines and products in South East London. April 2019 <https://selondonccg.nhs.uk/download/12365/>
- Hay fever. NHS. Last reviewed February 2021. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hay-fever/>
- SEL Integrated Guideline for the Management of Allergic Rhinitis. June 2019. <https://selondonccg.nhs.uk/download/12070/>
- Allergic rhinitis. NICE Clinical Summaries. August 2021. <https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/allergic-rhinitis/>