

Over the counter products

What causes allergies?

When you inhale a harmless substance, such as pollen, the immune system mistakenly perceives it as a "dangerous Invader." Your immune system then generates substances to fight the "invader." One of these substances is histamine, which triggers sneezing and causes the nasal passages to fill with fluid and cells. The result? Inflamed mucous membranes and the production of mucus. This causes a stuffy or runny nose, watery or itchy eyes, sneezing, coughing, and sometimes a sore throat.

A combination of an antihistamine and a corticosteroid nasal spray is the most effective treatment



Antihistamines

- Provide quick relief.
- Reduce sneezing, sniffing, and itching by blocking the effects of histamine.
- Newer, less sedating: Allegra, Claritin, or Zyrtec.
- Older, more likely to cause drowsiness: Benadryl.
- For antihistamine eye drops, try Zaditor or Alaway.



Corticosteroid nasal sprays

- Provide more long-term relief. Sprays take 2-4 weeks for their full effect. Start using before symptoms begin.
- May work better than oral antihistamines for congestion and stuffy nose.
- Try Rhinocort, Flonase, or Nasacort.



Decongestants

- Can help reduce inflammation in your nasal passages and provide relief.
- Can increase blood pressure and heart rate.
- Can cause anxiety or insomnia.
- Not recommended for people with heart disease, high blood pressure, or diabetes.

