

## Useful Telephone Numbers

### ENT Partnership

Surrey Clinic – 01252 852552

### Frimley Park Hospital

Switchboard – 01276 604604

Parkside – 01276 604703

FI (Children's Ward) – 01276 604226

ENT Ward – 01276 604130

### Clare Park Hospital

Switchboard – 01252 850216

Information for Patients on

# Pollen Allergy

### The ENT Partnership – Surrey Clinic

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## Introduction

Pollen grains contain large amounts of specific proteins that cause allergic reactions in people. These very small substances, known as allergens, are responsible for the seasonal allergic rhinitis – known as ‘hay fever’.

Allergy-inducing pollens (aero-allergens) are carried by air currents and the wind. Pollens can travel long distances. You may experience a reaction to a certain type of pollen even if the source plant does not grow nearby.

In the U.K., most native trees, including hazel, alder, poplar, oak, birch, beech, and pine, rely on the wind to spread their pollen. However, trees and shrubs that have heavily scented brightly coloured flowers (e.g. azaleas, roses) rely on bees and other insects to spread their pollen.

## The ENT Consultants are

### **Jonathan Hern FRCS (ORL).**

Appointed to Frimley Park Hospital in 2003. Special interest in rhinology including rhinoplasty surgery and also voice problems.

### **David Jonathan FRCS.**

Appointed to Frimley Park Hospital in 1991. Special interest in ear surgery, including implantable hearing aids. Involved in the regional training of ENT surgeons.

### **Andrew McCombe MD FRCS (ORL).**

Appointed to Frimley Park Hospital in 1995. Special interest in head and neck surgery. Involved in the management of NHS services. Special interest in medicolegal work.

## Sources of additional information

The Surrey & Hampshire ENT Partnership

[www.entpartnership.co.uk](http://www.entpartnership.co.uk)

British Association of Otorhinolaryngologists

[www.entuk.org](http://www.entuk.org)

The National Asthma Campaign

<http://www.asthma.org.uk>

The American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (ACAAI)

<http://allergy.mcg.edu>

Pollen forecast

[www.pollenforecast.org](http://www.pollenforecast.org)

British Allergy Foundation

**Deepdene House, 30 Bellegrove Road, Welling, Kent DA16 3BY**

**Helpline: 020 8303 8583**

The National Asthma Campaign

**Providence House, Providence Place, London N1 0NT**

**Tel: 020 7226 2260**

## Pollen Count

The pollen season, when trees and grasses are shedding their pollen, starts earlier in the south and west of England than it does in the north. A mild spring means an early start to the pollen season. While each aero-allergen has its own particular season, the following table can be used as a guide to the main types of allergens.

Allergen	Months	Season
Trees	Feb – May	Spring
Grasses	June – July	Mid-Summer
Weeds	Aug – Sept.	Late Summer/early Autumn

Pollen counts are higher during hot, dry or windy weather. Rain helps keep the pollen levels down.

The amount of pollen in the environment also rises and falls during different times of the day. It is higher mid-morning, early evening and at night. The pollen count is at its lowest in the early afternoon.

During the pollen season, the pollen count is broadcast on the TV/radio and published in the daily newspapers.

## Steroid and Antihistamine Therapy

Your doctor may prescribe medication to reduce and/or control your symptoms (e.g. runny nose, sneezing, itching and watery eyes). The main treatment is the use of steroid-based nasal sprays to treat nasal symptoms.

Eye drops may also be used.

This type of treatment has proved to be very effective and safe. For the best results, it is important that you follow your doctor's instructions carefully.

Antihistamine tablets that do not cause drowsiness can be used to suppress the body's immediate reaction to the allergy-causing pollen. They can also be used to prevent the onset of symptoms once the specific allergen has been identified.

## Allergen Avoidance

While it is impossible to totally avoid being exposed to air-borne pollens, the following measures can help to reduce your exposure to them.

- Monitor pollen count information and plan your activities accordingly.
- Keep windows/doors shut as much as possible during the pollen season.
- Air your houses during times when the pollen count is at its lowest (i.e. middle of the day).
- Avoid walking in open grassy spaces and tree-lined pathways.
- After playing an outdoor sport, change your clothes as soon as possible after the game has ended.
- Ask someone else, who does not have hay fever, to mow the lawn and/or rake leaves.
- Wear sunglasses when outside or near an open window/door.
- Drive with the car windows up, whenever possible. If your car has air-conditioning, choose 'recycle' rather than 'flow-through'.
- During the pollen season, take holidays near the sea or if travelling overseas try a region with a different pollen season.