



RHINITIS

WHAT IS IT?

- Inflammation or swelling of the lining of the nose causing an excess of nasal secretions. Rhinitis can be allergic or nonallergic.

WHAT YOU MAY FEEL

- Sneezing, nasal itching, nasal discharge, post-nasal drip, cough and nasal stuffiness.

CAUSE

- The most common causes of rhinitis are allergy or infection
 - ~ Common causes of allergic rhinitis include exposure to allergens such as pollens, mould spores and the dander of pets such as cat, dogs, horses or birds
 - ~ Some people with allergies may find taking aspirin worsens their allergic rhinitis
- Common causes of nonallergic rhinitis include exposure to dust, strong odours, sprays, smoke, cold air and exercise
- Infections such as the common cold

TREATMENT

- Avoidance is always the best treatment. If this is not possible try over the counter antihistamines and decongestants. Some people find saline sinus rinse helpful. For persistent symptoms your doctor can prescribe a medicated nasal spray.

OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS

- Over the counter nasal decongestant sprays used beyond 5 days in a row can lead to worsening of your rhinitis and should be avoided
- Some newer antihistamines may be helpful for allergic rhinitis. Reactine and Claritin are examples.
- Benadryl Total is a combination antihistamine and decongestant and may be helpful for nonallergic rhinitis. A common side effect is drowsiness. You should **NOT** take this medication if you have **high blood pressure**.

REFERENCES

1. Small et al, Rhinitis: A Practical and Comprehensive Approach to Assessment and Therapy, *J Otolaryngol*, Apr 2007 Supplement 1, Vol. 36, pS1-S4, 4p; (AN 25733848)