

ALLERGIC RHINOCONJUNCTIVITIS ACTION PLAN

NAME:

DATE:

ALLERGIC TO:

1. Stay away from your allergic triggers
 2. Stay away from cigarette smoke – it makes nose and breathing symptoms worse
 3. Medication
 - RELIEVER
 - Use this medication only as needed for itching, sneezing and runny nose
 - Available without a prescription
 - Reactine, Aerius, Allergra, Claritin: last 24 hours, are safe, and will not make you sleepy
 - EYE SYMPTOMS: Antihistamine eye drops may be helpful
 - Olopatadine (0.1%) ophthalmic drops 1 drop to each eye once to twice daily
 - PREVENTER
 - _____, 1 spray(s) in each nostril 1 time(s) a day
 - Use this **every day** for **at least 4-6 weeks**, even if you start feeling better
 - If your nose symptoms are gone after 4-6 weeks, you can decrease it and then stop it. If your symptoms return after you stop it, you can restart it and use it again for 4-6 weeks
 - If pollen is one of your allergies, it can be helpful to start taking your controller **2 weeks before the start of the pollen season**
- Using the preventer nose spray**
- Using a finger, plug the nostril the nose spray is NOT going into
 - Put the tip of the nose spray bottle in the nostril and aim the tip of the nozzle towards the ear on the same side (away from the middle of the nose)
 - Squirt the nose spray and at the same time “smell the flower” (instead of “snorting” the spray)
4. Immunotherapy
 - Consider if medications are not successful
 - Two types available:
 - Injections
 - Requires 3-5 years of monthly injections after a period of weekly injections
 - Often has long term benefit in decreasing symptoms of allergic rhinoconjunctivitis
 - Sublingual (under the tongue)
 - Currently only available for grass pollen allergy
 - Needs to be taken for 6 months each year

STAYING AWAY FROM ALLERGIC TRIGGERS

Tree, grass and weed pollens

- Stay indoors on days with a high pollen index
- Keep windows closed on hot windy days
- Change your clothes and shower after you have been outdoors (in your relevant pollen season)
- Pollen seasons in British Columbia:
 - Trees: February-July
 - Grass: April-September
 - Weeds: August-October

Dust mites

- Dust mites are microscopic 8-legged insects that are found in pillows, mattresses, carpeting, upholstered furniture, etc. that feed on human skin flakes. Proteins in the body and feces of the mites cause allergic reactions
- Decrease humidity in your home to <50%
- Minimize stuffed animals and other furry animals, especially on your bed
- Remove wall to wall carpets
- Use mite-proof covers to encase mattresses and pillows: These are tightly woven fabric covers that completely encase the mattresses and pillow and zip shut. Ensure that they are labeled dust mite proof. May be purchased from Sears (Aller-Ease) or Allergy Canada (www.allergycanada.com)
- Wash bed linens regularly using hot water (55°C)
- Vacuum regularly

*The above measures can help reduce the presence of the dust mites but will not eliminate them completely. You will have a better chance of reducing dust mites if multiple interventions are used instead of just one.

Cats, dogs and other animals

- Removal of the animal from the home is the most effective
- Once the pet is removed, it can take months for the air to be clear of the animal allergen
- If removal is not possible, minimize exposure to the animal:
 - Keep it out of the bedroom and living room
 - Wash the pet 1-2 times per week
- Using a HEPA room air cleaner may decrease the amount of airborne allergen
- There is no such thing as a hypoallergenic dog or cat because many proteins in the skin and saliva are allergenic

Mold

- Avoid outdoor mold found in rotting logs, fallen leaves, compost piles, etc.
- Clean visible indoor mold found in moist rooms (ie. kitchen, bathroom, basement) with diluted bleach
- A dehumidifier may be helpful for moist rooms
- Ensure there are no water leaks in your home
- Removing potted house plants may be helpful as mold may be found in the soil