



Are you suffering from seasonal allergic rhinitis (hay fever)?

Surveying the effectiveness of HayMax™ allergen barrier balm



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Allergy UK—Planwell House—LEFA Business Park—Edgington Way—Sidcup—Kent—DA14 5BH [www.allergyuk.org](http://www.allergyuk.org)

Allergy UK is the operational name of The British Allergy Foundation, a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales.

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## Foreword by Lindsey McManus, Deputy CEO, Allergy UK

As the leading national medical charity providing advice, information and support to people with allergy and food intolerance, the helpline at Allergy UK is inundated at this time of year with calls from people suffering from hay fever. We are often asked how people can best manage their symptoms, what treatments can they try as an effective solution to get through the season and where they can seek further support.

Hay fever is an underestimated condition and is often thought of by non-sufferers as just a sniffy nose or a nuisance caused by continual sneezing. In fact, it can be extremely debilitating for many sufferers and have a huge impact on their daily lives for long periods of the year.

Although 95% of sufferers are affected by the grass pollen season which runs from late May to early August, a further 25% of sufferers are affected by tree pollen. The birch pollen season (the main tree pollen in the UK) typically runs from mid-March to mid-May depending on the weather and the location in the UK. The weed pollen season gives high pollen counts for nettles and other weeds from mid-July. Although 20% of sufferers are affected by weed, those allergic to tree, grass and weed pollen suffer through much of the year with prolonged symptoms.

This two part survey carried out by Allergy UK aimed to provide an insight into how people have been diagnosed, how it impacts on their day to day lives, and to identify the symptoms that they struggle with the most. We also sought to investigate the effectiveness of HayMax™ allergen barrier balms. We are aware there are a lot of sufferers who are not managing their symptoms well, often due to the lack of understanding on how to use medication and treatments correctly. To keep symptoms under control sufferers need to be armed with the knowledge on how to combine treatments with practical lifestyle changes to form an effective allergy management plan. Many sufferers need more help to find a solution that works for them and are reaching out for support to manage these debilitating symptoms, which is reflected in this report.



## Introduction

Nearly 18 million people in the UK suffer with hay fever according to national charity Allergy UK.

Hay fever (or seasonal allergic rhinitis) can be a debilitating condition for sufferers with symptoms such as sneezing, itching and runny nose. The eyes may also be affected, with itching, redness and watering (allergic conjunctivitis). Hay fever can also cause a blocked or stuffy nose, which may lead to headaches and difficulty sleeping, and can aggravate asthma symptoms making it difficult to breathe for those sufferers who also have hay fever.

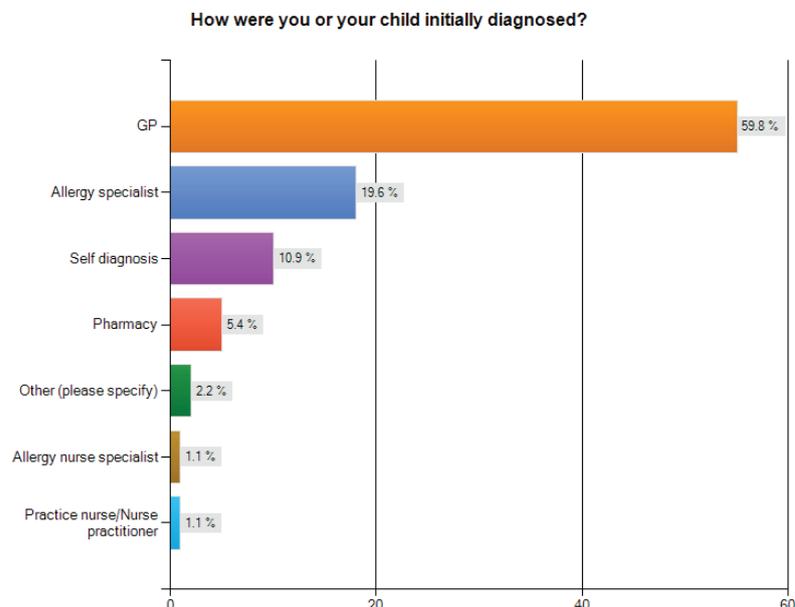
As well as medications, there are drug free alternative products hay fever sufferers can use to help relieve their symptoms. HayMax™ is an organic allergen barrier balm which can be applied to the base of the nose to help trap pollen and indoor airborne allergens such as house dust mites and pet dander before they enter the body.

Allergy UK conducted a study involving a survey with 73 sufferers with seasonal allergic rhinitis to determine the extent of their suffering during the hay fever season. Respondents were then asked to trial HayMax™ allergen barrier balm for up to two weeks to see whether this product was effective in reducing or eliminating symptoms. The results of the product trial are reported in this research.

## Key findings

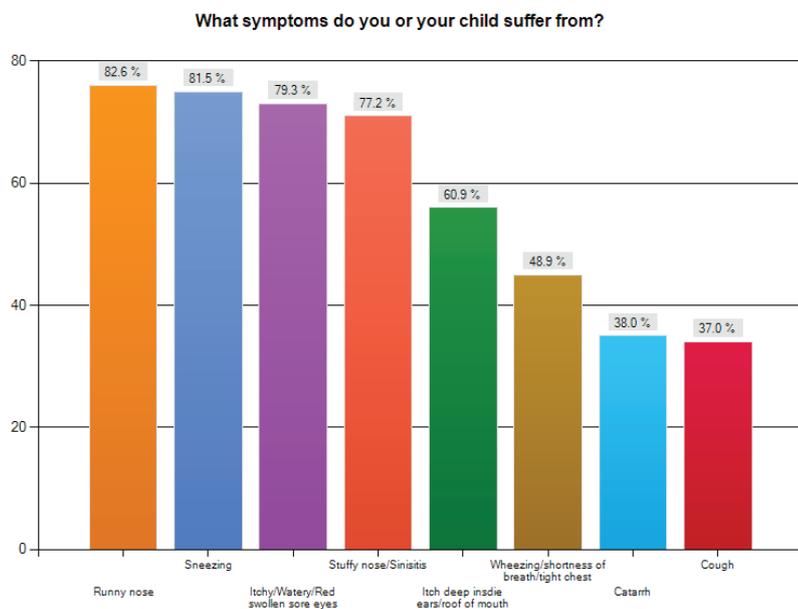
Nearly three quarters (77%) of respondents were adult sufferers. The remaining 23% were answered on behalf of those aged 17 years and under.

Of the respondents we asked:



The majority of the respondents (83%) were professionally diagnosed by a healthcare professional. This demonstrates that most participants surveyed suffer with a recognised allergic condition and therefore were suitable candidates to trial HayMax™ allergen barrier balm.

The top three symptoms that affected sufferers were runny nose, sneezing and itchy/watery/red swollen eyes.



*"I do not get all the symptoms at the same time and, depending on the symptoms, it affects my daily life. If I am constantly coughing and sneezing, it makes me feel tired with a lot of chest pain which results in me being unable to do anything for a few hours."*

*Other times when I have watery eyes and sneezing, it affects my ability to drive.*

*The itchiness is daily and constant; even taking antihistamines does not stop it - as a result I suffer from constant sore throat and headaches, again it affects my general wellbeing, energy levels and ability to function at my best."*

*"As a groundsman it can be very difficult working outside all day especially when the sun is shining and you constantly feel like you have a cold."*

The majority of respondents said grass (68%), tree (65%) and weed pollen (32%) were among the highest triggers during the summer months that caused their hay fever symptoms.

However, house dust mite (41%), animal dander - cat/dog/horse etc (34%) and moulds (26%) affected them all year round.

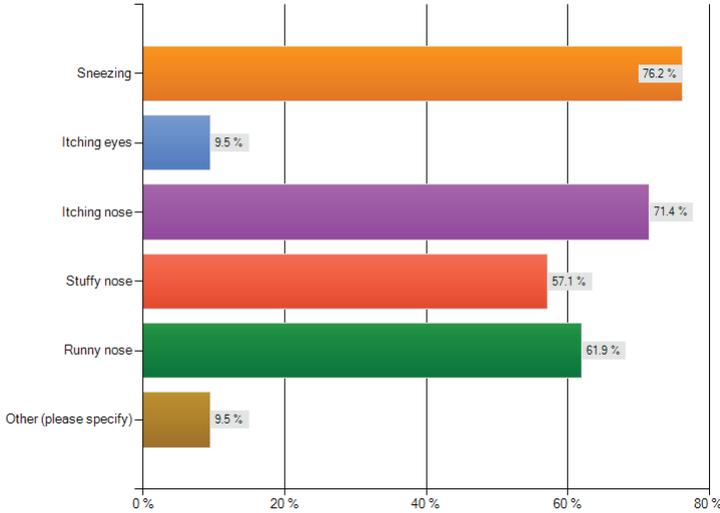
We asked the respondents if they suffered with their hay fever symptoms during the night and whether it affected their sleep. Worryingly a high proportion of these surveyed (87%) said their symptoms did cause sleepless nights. This also has an impact on daily routine.

A high majority (89%) of the respondents remarked their daily routine including going to school or work was affected by their symptoms of allergic rhinitis (hay fever).



After completing the initial survey, to find out how hay fever impacts on daily life and the extent of suffering just under half of participants who took part in the survey trialled HayMax™ allergen barrier balm, to see whether the product would improve their symptoms. Each respondent was given four pots of HayMax™ allergen barrier balm (Lavender, Aloe Vera, Frankincense and Pure), with information on how to apply the product and was advised they would be required to complete a follow up questionnaire. They were asked to feedback on whether they found HayMax™ allergen barrier balm effective and how it affected their symptoms.

What symptoms did it help with?



The product showed positive results for nasal symptoms. 76% of sufferers said that HayMax™ allergen barrier balm helped with their sneezing, 71% said it relieved their itching nose and 61% said it helped with their runny nose symptoms.

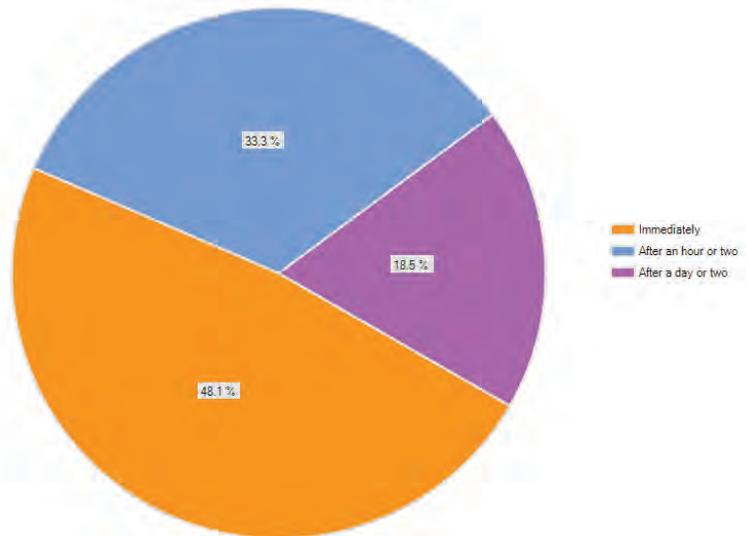
Whilst trialling the product 23% used HayMax™ allergen barrier balm once a day, 52% were using the product up to three times a day and 22% were using it more frequently (every couple of hours).

89% of people said that HayMax™ allergen barrier balm was very easy to apply.

93% of people found that HayMax™ allergen barrier balm was easy to carry around with them.

HayMax™ allergen barrier balm worked immediately for 48% of sufferers and worked after an hour or two for 33%.

How long did HayMax take to work?



78% said that HayMax™ allergen barrier balm helped some or all of their hay fever symptoms.

## Conclusion

Whilst it's reassuring to see that a majority of respondents (over three quarters) had their hay fever diagnosed by a healthcare professional such as a GP, nurse or allergy specialist, the results show many people are not getting the treatment or advice they need to effectively manage their condition. Although 60% are visiting their GP for initial diagnosis, the findings indicate they are not receiving ongoing treatment or support from a healthcare professional. This suggests people are not returning to their GP or pharmacist once initially diagnosed with the condition and instead are enduring unnecessary suffering in many cases.

This has had a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of sufferers. According to the survey results the condition is having a huge impact on the daily routines of approximately 90% of sufferers. It is likely this is linked to the lack of sleep respondents experience throughout the pollen season, which can impact on their performance at school or work, for example. Respondents reported suffering from extreme tiredness and a lack of concentration when carrying out daily activities due to their condition.

Before the product trial, respondents reported they were mostly suffering with runny nose symptoms, sneezing and itchy/watery/red swollen eyes due to their hay fever. A majority of participants completed the trial of HayMax™ allergen barrier balm using the product up to three times a day by applying it in and around their nostrils to trap pollen before it enters the nasal tract. Three quarters of respondents found it to be effective in reducing their sneezing, with over 60% finding some relief for their runny nose. They also reported the balm helped with their itching and stuffy nose. Overall nearly eight out of ten of those who undertook the trial stated that the product helped some or all of their symptoms.

These results are welcomed by Allergy UK. Whilst hay fever symptoms are not restricted to nasal areas, we are encouraged by the findings which show HayMax™ allergen barrier balm, an organic remedy, has been effective in relieving some of the most common symptoms of hay fever. As noted in our foreword, Allergy UK encourages sufferers to establish a complete allergy management plan that works for them which may involve a combination of treatment, medication and practical techniques (such as applying allergen barrier balms, avoiding outdoor areas/shutting windows in peak pollen counts, wearing wraparound sunglasses etc). If symptoms aren't improving with treatment, we must emphasize it's important to get medical advice to control this condition, which is also associated with the development of asthma. Sufferers are advised to go and see their pharmacist or GP, or contact Allergy UK's helpline on 01322 619898 in this case.



## Testimonials - Product Review

*"I don't leave the house without it, great product and have recommended to friends. Had a very special wedding to attend last weekend and HayMax™ barrier balm helped me get through the day without a sneeze."*

*"It is a good product that I will continue to use, but as I am on antihistamines, nasal spray and eye drops it is difficult to judge its full effectiveness for me. My husband has used one of the trial pots and found it has helped with sneezing etc. I much prefer using HayMax™ barrier balm to petroleum jelly!"*

*"Really like this product, great for my daughter's hay fever. Really like the fact it's organic."*

*"I've also found it useful to put on during the night so I don't wake up all stuffed up either."*

*"It was excellent, never realised how much of a difference it made."*

*"Simple but very effective, cured all of my hay fever symptoms apart from decreased lung capacity."*

*"I loved the fact it wasn't greasy like Vaseline. It was amazing! It worked really quickly and was refreshing to not have to constantly blow my nose and not sneezing every 5 mins."*

*"I love the product and will be recommending it to family and friends who have hayfever. I'm sure it will help me and my youngest son get through the hayfever season by easing our symptoms!"*

*"I think it's a great product, that is so handy to apply as and when is needed, it's also great that all the family can use it, from mum to toddlers!"*

*"Great product, will definitely tell my family and friends about it. It is so easy to use, cute little pots, although slightly bigger would be a benefit. I like the frankincense the best. I can't believe how well it works!"*



We also took into consideration any suggestions that our respondents advised us on:

*"A stronger differentiation between the different scents/flavours as they smell very similar. I'd also like to use it in stick form (like a lip balm) so I could apply directly around the nose."*

*"Maybe a larger pot due to the cost. Constant need to blow nose, sometimes leading to soreness. Socially embarrassing on occasions having to repeatedly blow nose."*

*"More manly scents!"*

*"I loved it, and can't really see how you could improve on it, except making a child friendly packet with a kids design on it to encourage them to want to use it."*

Allergy UK is the leading national medical charity providing advice, information and support to people with allergies and intolerances. Allergy UK acts as the 'voice' of allergy sufferers, representing the views and needs of those affected by this multi organ disease.

Allergy UK makes a difference through a dedicated helpline and network for sufferers. The charity provides invaluable information and guidance to empower sufferers so that they can manage their symptoms and receive appropriate diagnosis and treatment.



**Allergy UK Helpline**  
**01322 619898**  
**(9am to 5pm Monday to Friday)**  
**[www.allergyuk.org](http://www.allergyuk.org)**

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