

Management of Hay Fever: Oral antihistamines

August 2018



BwD and ELCCG do not support the routine prescribing of oral antihistamines for anyone over 12 years of age for the management of seasonal hay fever (exceptions apply - refer to the BwD and EL CCG Prescribing for Clinical Need Policy).

First line oral antihistamine treatment options should NOT be issued on an NHS prescription. **They are readily available Over the Counter for less than £1 from many retail outlets** and patients should be advised to purchase these treatments (see table below). Note that:

- Non-sedating antihistamines are usually first line treatment options
- Liquid antihistamines are generally more expensive. They are suitable for patients who cannot swallow tablets

Second line options include Fexofenadine 120mg tablets - a **Prescription Only Medication**. It is licensed in adults and children over the age of 12 for the relief of symptoms associated with seasonal allergic rhinitis. **Fexofenadine should only be considered for hay fever in those patients who have not responded to, or tolerated, ANY of the first line antihistamines listed below:**

	Antihistamine	Av. Cost
First line treatments (must be purchased OTC unless exception applies)	Cetirizine 10mg tablets (30 tablets)	£0.80
	Loratadine 10mg tablets (30 tablets)	£0.64
	Cetirizine oral solution sugar free 1mg/1ml (200ml)	£1.18
	Loratadine oral solution 5mg/5ml (100ml)	£1.53
Second line treatments	Fexofenadine 120mg tablets (30 tablets)	£2.13

First line oral antihistamine treatment options should NOT be issued on an NHS prescription for the management of seasonal hay fever for anyone over 12 years of age (unless there is an exception)

They are available cheaply Over the Counter and patients should be advised to purchase these treatments.

Fexofenadine 120mg tablets should only be considered for those patients who have not responded to, or tolerated ANY of the first line antihistamines.

For further information, please contact the Medicines Management Team on
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