

Non-Allergic Rhinitis

What is non-allergic rhinitis?

Rhinitis is a group of symptoms that affect the nose. Symptoms include a stuffy, watery, or itchy nose. Non-allergic rhinitis may cause the same symptoms, but allergies are not the cause.

What causes non-allergic rhinitis?

- **Irritants in the air.** This includes cigarette smoke, strong smells and fumes.
- **Spices** used in cooking.
- **Alcohol.** This is especially true of wine and beer.
- **Medicines.** Aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), some blood pressure medicines, nasal decongestant spray (if used too much), and street drugs.
- **Eating.** Even if foods are not spicy.
- **Infections** normally caused by a virus. This is common in young children.
- **Hormone changes.** This may happen when a female is pregnant or has her period (menstrual cycle).
- **Sudden changes in weather or temperature.**



How is it treated?

- Nasal spray.
- Saline nasal rinse.
- Antihistamines.
- Avoid the things that cause the problems. These are called triggers.

Your healthcare provider will tell you which treatment to use.

Allergies do not cause non-allergic rhinitis so allergy shots will not help.

If more information is needed, you may be referred to an Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) specialist.

ALERT: Call the doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if you have special health care needs not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for you or your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.