



Effective Health Care

Seasonal Allergy Treatments

Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Seasonal allergy treatments will go forward for refinement as a systematic review. The scope of this topic, including populations, interventions, comparators, and outcomes, will be further developed in the refinement phase.
- When key questions have been drafted, they will be posted on the AHRQ Web site and open for public comment. To sign up for notification when this and other Effective Health Care (EHC) Program topics are posted for public comment, please go to <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/join-the-email-list1/>.

Topic Description

Nominator: Individual

Nomination Summary: The nominator is interested in the comparative effectiveness of medications that are available over the counter versus prescription medications for the treatment of seasonal allergies.

Staff-Generated PICO

Population(s): All patients with seasonal allergies, including pregnant women; subgroups of patients with a codiagnosis of asthma and/or hypertension are of interest

Intervention(s): Over-the-counter allergy medications

Comparator(s): Prescription allergy medications

Outcome(s): Effectiveness (e.g., relief from nasal congestion, itchy eyes/ears, sore throat, fatigue), ease of use, side effects, costs, safety in pregnancy

Key Questions

from Nominator: 1. For people with seasonal allergies, what are the best treatment options?

Considerations

- The topic meets all EHC Program selection criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)
- Allergic rhinitis is the second leading cause of chronic disease in the US and is a significant cause of widespread morbidity, reduced work productivity, and lost school days. While not life threatening, it can

affect quality of life and may worsen a number of comorbidities, including asthma. Management decisions for seasonal allergies must be individualized and guided by age, frequency and severity of symptoms, allergen exposure, and comorbidities. Response to previous treatment, patient and family preferences, compliance with therapy, and cost are additional factors that enter management decisions for the patient with rhinitis. A review that examines the effectiveness and comparative effectiveness of available treatments may help to guide patient and clinician decision making about seasonal allergy treatment.