

VASOMOTOR RHINITIS

The nasal passages have a rich supply of blood vessels. When they become engorged with blood, the nose gets stuffy. As fluid leaks out of the vessels, excessive mucus flow can start and some of it can leak back into the throat (post-nasal drip). It is all a part of vasomotor rhinitis - **vasomotor** for the blood vessel connection and **rhinitis** for the nasal tissue inflammation.

You cannot really call this an illness as much as an exaggeration of normal events. The cells involved produce up to a pint of fluid a day, even in normal people. Patients with vasomotor rhinitis are super-sensitive to the irritants that give rise to all of this nasal activity.

Temperature or humidity changes, strong odors, alcohol, tobacco smoke, even changing a position in bed at night can cause it. You have to avoid such situations. It is a chronic problem, so don't expect time to take care of it.

Treatment:

Vasomotor rhinitis is a challenging problem to control. Below are the medications that can help the symptoms (no medication works perfectly, all of the time):

Atrovent Nasal Spray: This is a spray of ipratropium bromide. Although this can be effective in treating the excessive fluid of vasomotor rhinitis, it can cause a significant drying effect in the nose, which for some people is more annoying than the runny nose.

Astelin Nasal Spray: This is an antihistamine nasal spray, which may result in mild improvement. It is more effective for allergic rhinitis.

Nasal corticosteroids (Nasonex, Veramyst, Omnaris) decrease inflammation of the tissues within the nose. These often take several days to become effective, and typically, result in mild improvement.

Nasal decongestants act to decrease the swelling of the nasal tissue and can have a drying effect in the nose that temporarily decreases the symptoms of vasomotor rhinitis. Oral decongestants may cause sleeplessness and jitteriness. Topical nasal decongestants cause "rebound" congestion and irritation of the nasal passages if used more than 2-3 days. This means the stuffiness returns, but the nose spray doesn't help as much.