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## ORAL ANTIHISTAMINES (7/25)

### General Information

- Can be used on an as needed basis, yet best if used prior to significant allergy exposure (i.e., cats, cutting grass, picnics, etc).
- Oral antihistamines help relieve symptoms of sneezing, clear nasal discharge, itchy/watery/red eyes, and itchy nose/palate/and/or throat, yet **have no effect on nasal congestion**.
- Some antihistamines are combined with a decongestant ("D") to help with allergy related nasal congestion, yet this increases the viscosity of the mucus and may lead to a higher incidence of sinusitis or nasal infection.
- Use only one antihistamine at a time.
- Oral antihistamines are only useful for true allergy symptoms. These medications are not indicated and are not appropriate for use in colds or upper respiratory infections.

### First Generation Sedating Oral Antihistamines

- Many are available over-the-counter (OTC) without a prescription (Benadryl, Tavist, etc).
- First generation antihistamines often cause drowsiness, sedation, reduced motivation, as well as impaired motor and cognitive function. This poses significant safety hazards while driving or operating machinery.
- Become less effective if used over a prolonged period of time due to tolerance.
- Slow down the normal clearance of mucus from the nose and sinuses and can make you more susceptible to chronic sinusitis.

### Second Generation Non-Sedating Oral Antihistamines

Brand Name	Dose & Forms	Indicated Age (yr)	Recommended Dose	Sedation	Available OTC
<b>Claritin®, or generic loratidine</b>	1 mg/mL syrup 10 mg tablet 10 mg RediTabs®	2 to 5 ≥ 6	2.5-5 mg once daily 10 mg once daily	No	Yes
<b>Claritin-D® 12 Hour</b>	5 mg/120 mg extended-release tablet	≥ 12	One tablet twice daily	No	Yes
<b>Claritin-D® 24 Hour</b>	10 mg/240 mg extended-release tablet	≥ 12	One tablet daily	No	Yes
<b>Zyrtec®, or generic fexofenidine</b>	5 mg/5 mL syrup 5 mg tablets 10 mg tablets	2 to 5 6 to 12 ≥ 12	2.5 mg to 5 mg once daily (or 2.5 mg every 12 hours) 1-2 tablets daily One tablet daily	Mild	Yes
<b>Zyrtec D® 12 Hour</b>	5 mg/120 mg extended release tablet	≥ 12	One tablet twice daily	Mild	Yes
<b>Clarinex</b>	2.5 mg/ 5 mL syrup 5 mg tablet 5 mg RediTabs®	6 mo-11 yo >12	1.0-2.5 mg (2 -5 mL) once daily One 5 mg tablet once daily	No	No
<b>Allegra®</b>	30 mg tablet 60 mg capsule or tablet 180 mg tablet	6 to 11 ≥ 12 ≥ 12	30 mg twice daily 60 mg twice daily 180 mg once daily (SAR only)	No	No
<b>Allegra-D®</b>	60 mg/120 mg extended-release tablet	≥ 12	One tablet twice daily	No	No
<b>Xyzal</b>	5 mg tablet	6 mo-11 yo >12	2.5 mg once daily 5 mg once daily	No	No

### Contraindications

- Due to the decongestant component ("D") of some of the above preparations, this medication is contraindicated in patients with urinary retention, narrow-angle glaucoma, and concurrent use of monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitor antidepressants.