

Preview of the Medifocus Guidebook on: Hay Fever

Updated November 4, 2009



This document is only a SHORT PREVIEW of the **Medifocus Guidebook on Hay Fever**. It is intended primarily to give you a general overview of the **format and structure** of the Guidebook as well as select pages from each major Guidebook section listed in the Table of Contents.

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1 - Background Information

Introduction

Chronic or life-threatening illnesses can have a devastating impact on both the patient and the family. In today's new world of medicine, many consumers have come to realize that they are the ones who are primarily responsible for their own health care as well as for the health care of their loved ones.

When facing a chronic or life-threatening illness, you need to become an educated consumer in order to make an informed health care decision. Essentially that means finding out everything about the illness - the treatment options, the doctors, and the hospitals - so that you can become an educated health care consumer and make the tough decisions. In the past, consumers would go to a library and read everything available about a particular illness or medical condition. In today's world, many turn to the Internet for their medical information needs.

The first sites visited are usually the well known health "portals" or disease organizations and support groups which contain a general overview of the condition for the layperson. That's a good start but soon all of the basic information is exhausted and the need for more advanced information still exists. What are the latest "cutting-edge" treatment options? What are the results of the most up-to-date clinical trials? Who are the most notable experts? Where are the top-ranked medical institutions and hospitals?

The best source for authoritative medical information in the United States is the National Library of Medicine's medical database called PubMed®, that indexes citations and abstracts (brief summaries) of over 7 million articles from more than 3,800 medical journals published worldwide. PubMed® was developed for medical professionals and is the primary source utilized by health care providers for keeping up with the latest advances in clinical medicine.

A typical PubMed® search for a specific disease or condition, however, usually retrieves hundreds or even thousands of "hits" of journal article citations. That's an avalanche of information that needs to be evaluated and transformed into truly useful knowledge. What are the most relevant journal articles? Which ones apply to your specific situation? Which articles are considered to be the most authoritative - the ones your physician would rely on in making clinical decisions? This is where *Medifocus.com* provides an effective solution.

Medifocus.com has developed an extensive library of *MediFocus Guidebooks* covering a wide spectrum of chronic and life threatening diseases. Each *MediFocus Guidebook* is a

high quality, up- to-date digest of "professional-level" medical information consisting of the most relevant citations and abstracts of journal articles published in authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This information represents the latest advances known to modern medicine for the treatment and management of the condition, including published results from clinical trials. Each *Guidebook* also includes a valuable index of leading authors and medical institutions as well as a directory of disease organizations and support groups. *MediFocus Guidebooks* are reviewed, revised and updated every 4-months to ensure that you receive the latest and most up-to-date information about the specific condition.

About Your MediFocus Guidebook

Introduction

Your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a valuable resource that represents a comprehensive synthesis of the most up-to-date, advanced medical information published about the condition in well-respected, trustworthy medical journals. It is the same type of professional-level information used by physicians and other health-care professionals to keep abreast of the latest developments in biomedical research and clinical medicine. The *Guidebook* is intended for patients who have a need for more advanced, in-depth medical information than is generally available to consumers from a variety of other resources. The primary goal of a *MediFocus Guidebook* is to educate patients and their families about their treatment options so that they can make informed health-care decisions and become active participants in the medical decision making process.

The *Guidebook* production process involves a team of professionals with expertise in diverse areas including experienced medical database researchers and practicing physicians who serve as members of the *Medifocus.com* Medical Advisory Board (MAB). This team approach to the development and production of the *MediFocus Guidebooks* is designed to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and clinical relevance of the information. The *Guidebook* is intended to serve as a basis for more meaningful discussions between patients and their health-care providers in a joint effort to seek the most appropriate course of treatment for the disease.

Guidebook Organization and Content

Section 1 - Background Information

This section provides detailed information about the organization and content of the *Guidebook* including tips and suggestions for conducting additional research about the condition.

Section 2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* represents a detailed overview of the disease or condition specifically written from the patient's perspective. It is designed to satisfy the basic informational needs of consumers and their families who are confronted with the illness and are facing difficult choices. Important aspects which are addressed in "The Intelligent Patient" section include:

- The etiology or cause of the disease
- Signs and symptoms
- How the condition is diagnosed
- The current standard of care for the disease

- Treatment options
- New developments
- Important questions to ask your health care provider

Section 3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

This is a roadmap to important and up-to-date medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest developments and breakthroughs in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new clinical developments, and advances in research. To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles are grouped by specific categories. A typical *MediFocus Guidebook* usually contains one or more of the following article groupings:

- *Review Articles*: Articles included in this category are broad in scope and are intended to provide the reader with a detailed overview of the condition including such important aspects as its cause, diagnosis, treatment, and new advances.
- *General Interest Articles*: These articles are broad in scope and contain supplementary information about the condition that may be of interest to select groups of patients.
- *Drug Therapy*: Articles that provide information about the effectiveness of specific drugs or other biological agents for the treatment of the condition.
- *Surgical Therapy*: Articles that provide information about specific surgical treatments for the condition.
- *Clinical Trials*: Articles in this category summarize studies which compare the safety and efficacy of a new, experimental treatment modality to currently available standard treatments for the condition. In many cases, clinical trials represent the latest advances in the field and may be considered as being on the "cutting edge" of medicine. Some of these experimental treatments may have already been incorporated into clinical practice.

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Article title
- Author Name(s)
- Institution where the study was done

- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)
- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the corresponding URL address that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of a *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the article abstracts online by entering the individual URL address for a particular article into your web browser.

Section 4 - Centers of Research

We've compiled a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of the specific medical condition. The "Centers of Research" directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of the condition.

Inclusion of the names of specific doctors, researchers, hospitals, medical centers, or research institutions in this *Guidebook* does not imply endorsement by Medifocus.com, Inc. or any of its affiliates. Consumers are encouraged to conduct additional research to identify health-care professionals, hospitals, and medical institutions with expertise in providing specific medical advice, guidance, and treatment for this condition.

Section 5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver high-level, quality medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it. This section of your *Guidebook* offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Section 6 - Directory of Organizations

This section of your *Guidebook* is a directory of select disease organizations and support groups that are in the business of helping patients and their families by providing access to information, resources, and services. Many of these organizations can answer your questions, enable you to network with other patients, and help you find a doctor in your geographical area who specializes in managing your condition.

2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

HAY FEVER

Introduction to Hay Fever

The term "allergy" was first introduced in 1906 by an Austrian pediatrician named Clemens von Pirquet. His original meaning of the word has changed over time and is now used to refer to the body's hypersensitivity to substances or irritants in the environment. While people can have allergies to many different substances (foods, medications, plants), this Guidebook focuses on Hay Fever, also called Allergic Rhinitis or Seasonal Allergies.

Allergens (the substances that produces the allergic response) include trees, grasses, pet dander, mold, and dust mites. The body reacts to exposure to these allergens by producing an antibody called immunoglobulin E (IgE) in the intestines and lungs which triggers the release of different chemical mediators from inflammatory cells such as mast cells, basophils, and eosinophils. Examples of these chemical mediators of inflammation that can trigger an allergic or hypersensitivity response include: *autocoids* such as histamine, *eicosanoids* (prostaglandins), *cytokines*, *chemokines*, and *neuropeptides*.

The term *atopy* is often used to describe IgE-mediated diseases. People with atopy have a hereditary predisposition to produce IgE antibodies against common environmental allergens and usually have one or more atopic diseases such as hay fever, asthma, and atopic eczema.

The early or immediate phase of the allergic response occurs in sensitized persons within minutes of exposure to the allergen. Depending on the amount of the allergen, this early phase response is usually followed by the late phase reaction which reaches a peak 6-9 hours after exposure, then slowly resolves within 18-24 hours. This late phase is characterized by persistent symptoms (sneezing, runny nose) but predominantly by nasal congestion.

Allergic rhinitis (hay fever) typically starts in early childhood with symptoms peaking in the second, third and fourth decades of life. An onset of symptoms in infancy or later in adults is not uncommon. Allergy symptoms may range from the common and annoying sneezing, watery nose and itching eyes, to more severe reactions which may be life-threatening.

Asthma is often associated with allergies. In fact, allergy-induced asthma is the most common type of asthma in the United States. Twenty to fifty percent of patients with allergic rhinitis have concomitant asthma, and 60% of people with asthma have the allergic type. Airway hyperresponsiveness, the exaggerated narrowing of the airways after the inhalation of various stimuli, is a key feature of asthma. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the prevalence of asthma among U.S. children increased from 3.6% in 1980 to 5.8% in 2003. Asthma is the third leading cause of hospitalization among persons under the age of 18 in

the United States.

Allergic symptoms can interfere significantly with many aspects of daily living as a result of physical discomfort and emotional distress. Numerous clinical studies have demonstrated the affects of rhinitis on sleep, concentration, performance at work and school, social life and other activities and the importance of control of the disease and its symptoms.

It has been estimated that 20-40 million Americans are affected by seasonal allergies One study puts the annual costs for seasonal allergies at \$2.4 million for medications and another \$1.1 billion in other health care costs.

Sources of allergens that can act as triggers for hay fever include:

- Plants - trees, flowers
- Grasses
- Ragweed
- Leaf mold
- Dust mites (microscopic insects that feed on human skin cells)Molds
- Animal dander

The **Intelligent Patient Overview** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Hay Fever** also includes the following additional sections:

- **Diagnosis of Hay Fever**
- **Treatment of Hay Fever**
- **Allergies in Children**

To Order the Complete **Guidebook on Hay Fever** [Click Here](#)
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3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

Introduction

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a comprehensive bibliography of important recent medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest advances in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new developments, and advances in research.

To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles in this *MediFocus Guidebook* are grouped in the following categories:

- Review Articles - 36 Articles
- General Interest Articles - 23 Articles
- Drug Therapy Articles - 13 Articles
- Clinical Trials Articles - 43 Articles
- Immunotherapy Articles - 13 Articles

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Title of the article
- Name of the authors
- Institution where the study was done
- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)
- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the URI that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of the *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the abstracts online by entering the individual URI for a particular abstract into your computer's web browser.

Recent Literature: What Your Doctor Reads

Database: PubMed < January 2007 to November 2009 >

Review Articles

1.

Desloratadine and pseudoephedrine combination therapy as a comprehensive treatment for allergic rhinitis and nasal congestion.

Author: Anolik R
Institution: ranolik@allergypc.com
Journal: Expert Opin Drug Metab Toxicol. 2009 Jun;5(6):683-94.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=AM017&ID=19473112>

2.

From pollinosis to digestive allergy.

Authors: Bartra J; Sastre J; del Cuvillo A; Montoro J; Jauregui I; Davila I; Ferrer M; Mullol J; Valero A
Institution: Unitat d'Allergia, Servei de Pneumologia i Allergia Respiratoria, Hospital Clinic (ICT), Barcelona, Spain. jbartra@clinic.ub.es
Journal: J Investig Allergol Clin Immunol. 2009;19 Suppl 1:3-10.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=AM017&ID=19476048>

3.

Diagnosis and management of nasal congestion: the role of intranasal corticosteroids.

Author: Benninger M
Institution: The Cleveland Clinic, Head and Neck Institute, Cleveland, OH 44195, USA. benninm@ccf.org
Journal: Postgrad Med. 2009 Jan;121(1):122-31.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=AM017&ID=19179820>

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- Immunotherapy Articles - 13 Articles

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4 - Centers of Research

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition. The *Centers of Research* directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of this disorder.

Use the *Centers of Research* directory to contact, consult, or network with leading experts in the field and to locate a hospital or medical center that can help you.

The following information is provided in the *Centers of Research* directory:

- **Geographic Location**

- United States: the information is divided by individual states listed in alphabetical order. Not all states may be included.
- Other Countries: information is presented for select countries worldwide listed in alphabetical order. Not all countries may be included.

- **Names of Authors**

- Select names of individual authors (doctors, researchers, or other health-care professionals) with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition, who have recently published articles in leading medical journals about the condition.
- E-mail addresses for individual authors, if listed on their specific publications, is also provided.

- **Institutional Affiliations**

- Next to each individual author's name is their **institutional affiliation** (hospital, medical center, or research institution) where the study was conducted as listed in their publication(s).
- In many cases, information about the specific **department** within the medical institution where the individual author was located at the time the study was conducted is also provided.

Centers of Research

United States

CA - California

<u>Name of Author</u>	<u>Institutional Affiliation</u>
Boyle JM	Allergy and Asthma Medical Group and Research Center, San Diego, CA 92123, USA. eomeltzer@aol.com
Corren J	Allergy Research Foundation, Los Angeles, California 90025, USA. jcorren@ucla.ed
McMorris BJ	Allergy and Asthma Medical Group and Research Center, San Diego, California, USA.
Meltzer EO	Allergy and Asthma Medical Group and Research Center, San Diego, California, USA.
Philpot E	Allergy and Asthma Medical Group and Research Center, San Diego, California 92123, USA. EOMELTZER@aol.com

CO - Colorado

<u>Name of Author</u>	<u>Institutional Affiliation</u>
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Nathan RA	University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Denver, Colorado, USA. DrRNathan@aol.com
Nelson HS	Department of Medicine, National Jewish Health, Denver, CO 80206, USA. nelsonh@njc.org
Stanford R	Asthma and Allergy Associates, Colorado Springs, CO, USA.
Weber RW	National Jewish Medical and Research Center, The University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, 1400 Jackson Street, Room J326, Denver, CO 80206, USA. weberr@njc.org

The **Centers of Research** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Hay Fever** includes the following sections:

- Centers of Research for relevant states in the United States
- Centers of Research listed for relevant countries outside the United States

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5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

Introduction

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver a high level and quality of medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it.

The process of finding and choosing a physician to manage your specific illness or condition is, in some respects, analogous to the process of making a decision about whether or not to invest in a particular stock or mutual fund. After all, you wouldn't invest your hard earned money in a stock or mutual fund without first doing exhaustive research about the stock or fund's past performance, current financial status, and projected future earnings. More than likely you would spend a considerable amount of time and energy doing your own research and consulting with your stock broker before making an informed decision about investing. The same general principle applies to the process of finding and choosing a physician. Although the process requires a considerable investment in terms of both time and energy, the potential payoff can be well worth it--after all, what can be more important than your health and well-being?

This section of your Guidebook offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Tips for Finding Physicians

Finding a highly qualified, competent, and compassionate physician to manage your specific illness or condition takes a lot of hard work and energy but is an investment that is well-worth the effort. It is important to keep in mind that you are not looking for just any general physician but rather for a physician who has expertise in the treatment and management of your specific illness or condition. Here are some suggestions for where you can turn to identify and locate physicians who specialize in managing your disorder:

- **Your Doctor** - Your family physician (family medicine or internal medicine specialist) is a good starting point for finding a physician who specializes in your illness. Chances are that your doctor already knows several specialists in your geographic area who specialize in your illness and can recommend several names to you. Your doctor can also provide you with information about their qualifications, training, and hospital affiliations.

The **Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Hay Fever** includes additional information that will assist you in locating a highly qualified and competent physician to manage your specific illness.

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6 - Directory of Organizations

Allergy and Asthma Network Mothers of Asthmatics

2751 Prosperity Ave., Suite 150, Fairfax, VA 22031

800-878-4403

www.aanma.org

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

555 East Wells Street, Suite 1100, Milwaukee, WI 53202-3823

414-272-6071

info@aaaai.org

www.aaaai.org

American Lung Association

61 Broadway, 6th Floor NY, NY 10006

800-548-8252

www.lungusa.org

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

1233 20th Street, NW, Suite 402, Washington, DC 20036

800-727-8462

Info@aafa.org

www.aafa.org/

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

NIAID Office of Communications and Public Liaison, 6610 Rockledge Drive, MSC 6612,
Bethesda, MD 20892-6612

301-496-5717

www3.niaid.nih.gov

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

P.O. Box 12233, MD NH-10 Research Triangle Park, North Carolina 27709-2233

(919) 541-3345

www.niehs.nih.gov

The **Directory of Organizations** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Hay Fever** includes a list of selected disease organizations and support groups that are helping people diagnosed with Hay Fever.

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