

## Seasonal symptoms

Seasonal symptoms related to allergies to pollen are likely to cause challenges in recognising COVID-19 symptoms and appropriate exclusion from workplaces. This includes essential workplaces such as health services and has workforce implications over spring and summer.

People with a history of seasonal rhinorrhea, sneezing or cough should seek medical advice to optimise their management ahead of the pollen season. Their general practitioner can also help with:

- a written management plan which includes what symptoms should be treated as hayfever or asthma and what symptoms require testing for COVID-19
- a letter for their workplace with a copy of the management plan.

This should help to reduce seasonal symptoms and unnecessary absences from work.

## Clinical assessment

Clinical judgement should be applied in determining whether rhinorrhoea represents suspected COVID-19 (requiring testing) or allergic rhinitis. There should be a low threshold for testing.

Factors that would make **allergic rhinitis** more likely include:

- history of seasonal rhinitis in previous years at a similar time of year
- concomitant itchy nose and eyes.

Factors that would make **COVID-19** more likely include:

- other respiratory symptoms (sore throat, cough, anosmia) or
- systemic symptoms (eg fever, myalgia, anorexia).