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[American Academy of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery](#)

## **Long-term bouts with hay fever worsen ability to breathe through your nose**

Alexandria, VA -- New evidence for the first time suggests that people suffering from hay fever (allergic rhinitis) will over time experience a progressive worsening of their nasal passage functioning, depending on how long they have the disorder, according to a new study published in the June 2008 edition of *Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery*.

The study, authored by researchers in Italy, discovered that in 100 patients (50 with short-term rhinitis, and 50 with long-term), those who experienced longer bouts with the disorder (on average, nine years) had significantly lower airflow in their nasal passages. Furthermore, 72 percent of the patients with long-term rhinitis had severe nasal obstruction.

Allergic rhinitis, commonly referred to as hay fever, occurs when the body's immune system over-responds to specific, non-infectious particles such as plant pollens, molds, dust mites, and animal hair, among others. This causes skin redness and swollen membranes in the nasal passages, combined with sneezing and congestion. It is estimated that between 10 and 20 percent of the American population suffers from hay fever, and accounts for approximately 2 percent of all visits to a doctor's office.

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*Otolaryngology · Head and Neck Surgery* is the official scientific journal of the American Academy of Otolaryngology · Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS). The study's authors are Giorgio Ciprandi, MD; Ignazio Cirillo, MD; Angela Pistorio, MD; and Stefania LaGrutta, MD. They are associated with San Martino Hospital, in Genoa, Italy.

Reporters who wish to obtain a copy of this study should contact Matt Daigle at 1-703-519-1563, or at [newsroom@entnet.org](mailto:newsroom@entnet.org).

**About the AAO-HNS**

The American Academy of Otolaryngology ·Head and Neck Surgery ([www.entnet.org](http://www.entnet.org)), one of the oldest medical associations in the nation, represents nearly 12,000 physicians and allied health professionals who specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the ears, nose, throat, and related structures of the head and neck. The Academy serves its members by facilitating the advancement of the science and art of medicine related to otolaryngology and by representing the specialty in governmental and socioeconomic issues. The organization's mission: Working for the Best Ear, Nose, and Throat Care.

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