

# Breathe Easy Everyday Care Report



**Unblock the mystery of sniffles and snuffles  
to keep a clear head all year round**

In collaboration with Dr. Angharad Rudkin, Clinical Psychologist  
and mum, and Dr. Roger Henderson, Family GP and dad

***Olbas***<sup>®</sup>



**Introduction in collaboration with Dr. Angharad Rudkin\*, Clinical Psychologist and mum of three**

While all of our senses are important, our sense of smell is probably the most primitive as it is directly connected to the emotion centres of our brain. As such, smells can influence our memory, learning and experiences.

That's why a waft of a particular smell can hit you like a punch in the gut, or act like arms in a loving embrace - smells evoke certain memories. In fact, some research suggests that people can remember memories from as young as five from a simple smell, that's how strong it is. Whether it's the smell of your favourite food on the stove or your partner's aftershave or perfume, smells create a powerful imprint on the mind.

When it comes to taste, you may love the flavours of a Sunday roast or a full English breakfast, but it's suggested



that as much as 80% of those flavours come from the smell. Which is why, when you're faced with the sniffles or a blocked nose, you're often less bothered about what you're eating.

Our sense of smell works like an early warning system: if a smell is unpleasant then our nose gives us a signal that there could be danger ahead. This could be anything from something a little 'off' in the fridge to something more serious like a gas leak or a fire. Furthermore, studies<sup>1</sup> have shown that babies less than 2 days old can differentiate between smells, as demonstrated when they turn towards their mother's odour when looking for food or comfort.

To emphasise how important our sense of smell really is to us, it can also play a significant part in how we pick our partner. I'm not talking about favourite perfumes or a dodgy body odour, it's in our DNA, as our bodies release pheromones that send signals to potential suitors about our availability.

So, for most of us, when congestion causes a blocked nose we often feel very frustrated by the associated loss of smell.

**“The importance of smell goes beyond summoning memories. It also plays a big part in our sense of taste, can often keep us safe and even help us fall in love.”**

1 2009. Chemical communication and mother-infant recognition. Communicative & Integrative Biology. [online] 2(3), pp.279-281. Available at: <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2717541/>>.

\*Please note healthcare professionals named in this article do not endorse Olbas or its products





# Scents take us back

Studies have shown that memories triggered by smells mostly stem from when we were ten years old or under. So smells can help us access memories which we as adults may otherwise never think about. It's therefore no surprise that certain smells often bring up feelings of nostalgia.

**76%**

of people find certain aromas evoke fond memories



The latest research from Olbas found that freshly cut grass, a roast dinner and crayons are the top smells that cast our minds back to childhood. Roses, sweets and Play-Doh also ranked highly among the scents that trigger memories of growing up while the distinct smell of grandparents' homes and mothers' perfume also cause adolescent memories to come flooding back for many Brits.

**61%**

of people claim encountering smells they love has a positive impact on their mood



It is incredibly powerful what feelings, emotions and memories certain smells can evoke. From childhood memories to feelings of comfort and relaxation, it is clear that what we smell can have a profound impact on our memories and often our mood. So, it's crucial that we look after our noses so we can continue to breathe easily and celebrate our favourite scents.

## Top ten smells that whiff of nostalgia

1. Freshly cut grass
2. Favourite childhood meals like Bolognese or a roast dinner
3. Crayons
4. Roses
5. Sweets
6. Play-Doh
7. The smell of a school
8. The countryside
9. Our mother's perfume
10. Pencil shavings





Smells don't just bring a smile to our faces, they can often be associated with something, whether it be BBQs and summer, or toffee apples on bonfire night. Olbas found that when it comes to quintessential British smells, fish and chip shops ranked highest, followed closely by roast dinners and the pub.



Smells can trigger associations to places as well as people for

**47%**

When we're bunged up with a sniffle, it is often the treasured smells that we miss the most as they can be the most comforting when we're not feeling at our best. That's why, for generations, Olbas has provided an effective way for the whole family to relieve congestion and help to breathe more easily every day.



There are often unusual smells that can bring a smile to our faces and many of us feel embarrassed to reveal those eccentric odours that we love, though 39 per cent find it amusing when a loved one tells them about an unusual smell they adore.

#### Top ten 'odd' smells we love...

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. New car             | 6. Fireworks           |
| 2. Curry               | 7. Extinguished candle |
| 3. Bonfire             | 8. Chopped garlic      |
| 4. Leather shoes       | 9. Swimming pools      |
| 5. Freshly-laid tarmac | 10. Sharpened pencil   |

**27%**

of people admit to going out of their way to encounter smells they enjoy





# Sniffle triggers

There are many possible causes for the sniffles or a blocked nose, with the most common being infections such as colds and flu, allergies such as hay fever, rhinitis (nasal inflammation) and nasal polyps.

Less common causes include swollen adenoid glands, nasal injuries and of course, as anyone with children will know, foreign objects stuck in the nose.

A decongestant like Olbas is an effective aid for a blocked nose but should be used in conjunction with another treatment for long-term effects.



## The Common Cold

A blocked nose is a symptom of the common cold and there may be a nasty discharge from the nose that could either be clear, yellow or green and vary from watery, i.e. the sniffles, to thick and sticky. Whilst this typically will clear up after a few days you can treat the symptoms of a cold with over-the-counter medicines:



### Decongestants

Does what it says on the tin, help to relieve decongestion and soothe the symptoms of a blocked nose



### Paracetamol or Ibuprofen

Will help relieve any aches and pains and lower body temperature if you have a fever



### Cold & Flu tablets

Often contain paracetamol and decongestants to relieve a wider array of symptoms including headaches, aches and pains, blocked noses and more...



## Hayfever

While the common cold can hit any time of year, they are more prevalent in the colder Autumn and Winter months. So, just when you think you and your family might get some relief in Spring and Summer, along comes hayfever.



Approximately **1 in 5** people in the UK will suffer from hayfever at some point in their lives<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.chemist-4-u.com/guides/hayfever/hay-fever-statistics-uk/>

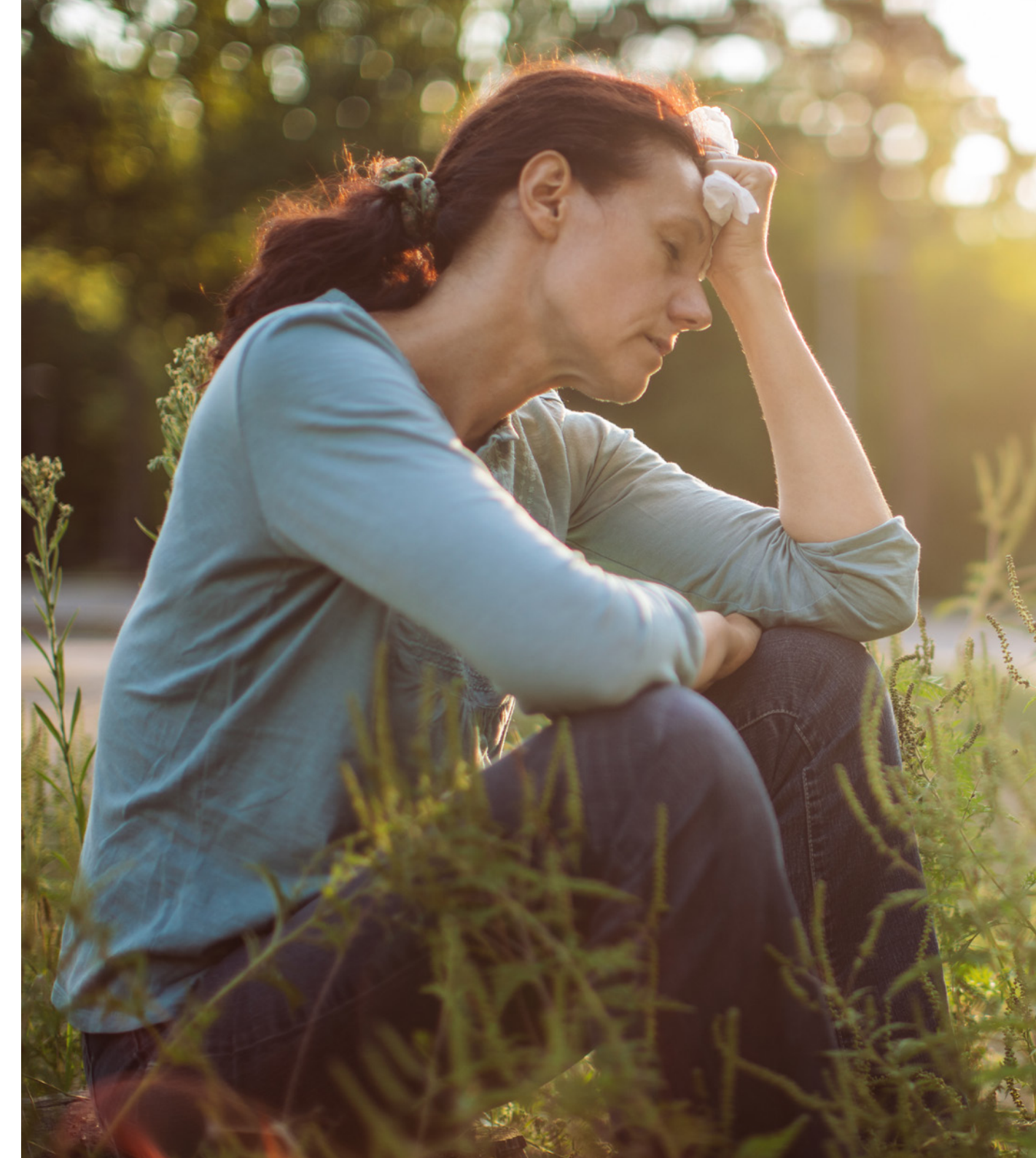


Hay fever is an allergic reaction to pollen, typically when it comes into contact with your mouth, nose, eyes and throat. It is usually worse between late March and September, especially when it's warm, humid and windy. This is when the pollen count is at its highest.

The most obvious treatment for hayfever is to avoid the allergen altogether but, unless you want to spend the summer keeping yourself and the kids indoors, this seems unlikely. There are effective over the counter treatments available to alleviate the symptoms of hayfever.

## Symptoms of hayfever

- sneezing and coughing
- a runny or blocked nose
- itchy, red or watery eyes
- itchy throat, mouth, nose and ears
- loss of smell
- pain around your temples and forehead
- headache
- earache
- feeling tired





# Feeling blue

When we are feeling congested and have a blocked nose, losing our sense of smell can have an impact on our mood, as Dr Angharad explains:

“There’s no surprise that a loss of smell can lead to feelings of depression as our sense of smell is so closely linked to our sense of taste and our emotions. Not being able to taste your favourite food or smell your newborn baby is bound to take some of the enjoyment out of life”

So whilst you can’t always avoid a blocked nose, there are things you can do to keep your spirits high when you or your family are struggling.



## Bring that smile back

**Movie Marathon** - why not get together under the duvet and enjoy some of your favourite films

**Get Crafty** - take up a new hobby such as painting by numbers, knitting or making yourself a bracelet

**Board Games & Cards** - go from bored to board games and keep your brain sharp while spending time with family or friends

**Write a letter** - turn off social media and actually put pen to paper to contact a friend the old-fashioned way

**Sing a long** - create a playlist of some of your favourite songs and, if you can, sing along or why not get the kids to do a performance for you

**Spa treatment** - take a long hot soak in the bath, treat yourself with candles and bubbles and maybe apply a face mask afterwards if you're up to it





# Unblock your nose and unlock your senses

Dr Roger Henderson, GP and Olbas Expert<sup>3</sup> shares the best treatments and top tips for relieving a blocked or runny nose. These may need repeating until your nose is fully clear again:

## Steam Inhalations and humidifiers

Breathing in warm moist air through the nose can help to soothe irritated and inflamed nasal tissue and can help thin out nasal mucus making it less thick and easier to clear. Steam from a shower can help in the same way. You can also use saline sprays and solutions that wash out the nose and help drain mucus out of it more easily. Using steam inhalations just before you go to bed can be helpful too.

## Menthol-based products

Ingredients such as menthol or eucalyptus oil can help ease nasal congestion and are found in Olbas products. They can be used in a number of ways:

1. Oils which you add to hot water for steam inhalations
2. Decongestant drops and sprays for the nose - these should only be used for a maximum of 5-7 days
3. Throat sweets to suck

## Steroid sprays

Available both over the counter or on prescription, steroid sprays can be very effective in reducing the congestion of a blocked nose, especially if it is caused by allergies such as hay fever, or by nasal polyps. They work by reducing the swelling of the lining of the nose.

## Top Tips for the whole family



**Hydrate** - keeping hydrated will help thin out nasal mucus



**Prop it up** - try and sleep with your head propped up



**Keep it cool** - keep your bedroom cool, a humidifier might help too



**Warm compress** - a warm, wet towel over the nose and forehead will reduce inflammation



**Cut down dairy** - as they can cause mucus to thicken up





# Conclusion

It's clear that our sense of smell is something to cherish and no matter what age we are or what time of year it is, we need to appreciate it and look after it.

**Claire Campbell, Brand Manager for Olbas** said: "We wanted to understand what smells bring out in us, what memories they might evoke and how they affect our moods. It's no surprise that as one of the five key senses, and one so closely linked to emotions, the results were quite profound. It's great to see that the whiff of a Sunday roast and family dinners can take us back to days gone by, especially as we look to instil those same memories with our families moving forward.

Olbas is here to help keep your noses clear and your spirits high all year round, while caring for the senses of every generation".



## About Olbas

As the key to our sense of smell, our noses have a lot of responsibility. Yet they come under attack all year round from everything to the common cold to hayfever, leading to congestion, sneezes and snuffles. When our noses are miserable, it's no fun for anyone!

Thankfully, Olbas products are always on hand to help noses big and small find relief, wherever and whenever they need it.

**Olbas Oil** is a special mixture of pure plant oils, with ingredients including clove oil, eucalyptus, juniper berry and cajuput. It's the combination of these natural ingredients which releases those famous natural vapours.

**Olbas**, the UK's number one decongestant oil brand<sup>4</sup>, is here to help blocked noses for every generation. Olbas has a product for every nose and works hard to ease the symptoms of congestion and stuffiness often caused by the common cold, flu and hayfever.

To use, just put a few drops on a handkerchief to help unblock even the stuffiest blocked nose, tuck the hanky into your pillowcase at night for soothing night-time congestion relief to aid restful sleep.

Or for a really intense Olbas experience, put a few drops of **Olbas Oil** into a bowl of hot water and lean over it, covering your head with a towel. It's enough to clear even the most stubborn of blocked noses.

For little noses, there's **Olbas for Children**, a gentle formulation to relieve congestion in even the smallest noses of the family – from as young as 3 months old.

Enjoy portable but powerful Olbas vapours with **Olbas Inhaler and Olbas Nasal Spray**, handy blocked-nose relief, on-the-go! In fact, Olbas Nasal Spray is clinically proven to prevent the spread of infections and unblock the nasal passages for adults and children aged six and over.



<sup>4</sup> IRI Total Decongestants category, Value sales, 52 weeks ending 2nd October 2021. Total UK

\* For congestion. Olbas for children from 3 months. Always read the label.



**Olbas<sup>®</sup>**

[www.olbas.co.uk](http://www.olbas.co.uk)

The Olbas Breathe Easy Everyday Report is based on insights and consumer perceptions from a survey of 2,000 British adults commissioned by Olbas and OnePoll, September 2021.