

THE PROACTIVE

Volume 5

Seasonal Allergies

May 2018

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Medication *and* Treatment

Knowing your triggers is key in treating and managing your symptoms. Speaking with an allergist can not only help determine your triggers, but assist in determining the best options for treatment. There are a variety of medications, over-the-counter and prescription, that can help reduce allergy symptoms:

Over-the-Counter

- Oral Antihistamines (Allegra, Benadryl, Claritin, Zyrtec)
- Nasal Sprays (Flonase, Nasacort, Rhinocort)
- Eye Drops (Zaditor, Visine)

Prescription

- Antihistamine Nasal Sprays (Dymista, Qnasl, Omnaris)
- Ophthalmic Antihistamines (Patanol, Pataday, Azelastine, Naphazoline)
- Epinephrine (Epipen autoinjector)

Sometimes, the easiest way to treat an allergy is to avoid the allergen altogether.

■ Reduce Exposure ■

Track the pollen count in your area and try to stay indoors when pollen counts are highest.

- Spring: Trees – Birch, Cedar, Alder, Horse Chestnut, Willow
- Summer: Grass, Ryegrass, Timothy-grass, Weeds
- Fall: Pollen from Ragweed, Nettles, Mugworts, Fat Hens, Plantains
- Winter: Mold, Pet Dander, Dust Mites, Cockroaches

■ Shower It Off ■

If you've been outside, shower before bed to remove pollen, especially from your face and hair.

■ Nasal Irrigation ■

Get a neti pot to wash your nasal passages with a saline solution twice per day.

■ Filter It Out ■

Equip your home with HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filters.



Sniffling and Sneezing?

It May Be Seasonal Allergies

If you find yourself sneezing and coughing, or your nose and eyes itch during a certain time of the year, you may have seasonal allergies.

Allergies refer to an abnormal immune response to a foreign substance that can produce a wide range of symptoms. Your body responds to that substance, or allergen, by releasing histamines and other chemicals into your bloodstream. Those chemicals produce the symptoms of an allergic reaction.

Symptoms will depend on the allergy and its severity and can affect the airways, sinuses, nasal passages, and skin and digestive systems. An allergic reaction can result in symptoms such as itchy eyes and skin, sneezing, nasal congestion, wheezing, vomiting, and/or rash. The effects of allergies varies from person to person and can range from minor symptoms to anaphylaxis, which is a life-threatening emergency.

The most common triggers of seasonal allergies are: trees, grass, weed pollen, and mold. While the time of the year and the intensity of an allergy vary across the country, climate factors can also influence an individual's symptoms.

Did You Know?

- Pollen levels tend to be higher in the morning and can soar after rainfall.
- Tree, grass, and ragweed pollens thrive during warm days and cool nights.
- On a dry, windy day, pollen levels rise.
- Mold grows quickly in heat and high humidity.

In most cases, seasonal allergies refer to grass, pollen, and mold, but there are other triggers that also relate. For instance, in the summer, smoke from campfires, insect bites/stings, and chlorine in swimming pools can cause allergic reactions. Even pine trees at Christmas time can trigger a body's natural immune response.

