

SNEEZES AND WHEEZES

Tree Pollen Springs into Action!!

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**SPRING IS
HERE!!**



**ARE YOUR
ALLERGY
PRESCRIPTIONS
CURRENT?**



Spring is in the air and it's not alone. With the onset of warmer temperatures come the onslaught of allergy-inducing pollens, and the misery they bring to those who suffer from seasonal allergies. Sometimes referred to as "hay fever" (although not caused by hay nor fever) seasonal allergic rhinitis is the body's reaction to airborne pollens released by plants each Spring, Summer and Fall.

In the process of wafting through the air to find similar plants to fertilize, these microscopic culprits end up in the nose and throat of allergy/asthma sufferers, triggering an outbreak of sneezing, congestion, runny nose and itchiness of the eyes, nose and throat. Asthmatics experience tightness in the chest, a hacking cough, and difficulty breathing.

Trees are the earliest pollen producers, springing into action as early as January each year to kick off the spring allergy season. While pollination periods vary by regions, the season for specific types of trees is constant from year to year within each region. Rain and temperatures may affect the amount of pollen produced each year, but not the beginning or end of a tree's pollen season.

The first step in minimizing spring suffering is to determine which trees you have sensitivity to. Your board-certified allergist/immunologist can help you identify the offending allergens. Local area pollen counts can then be used to help reduce exposure by avoidance.

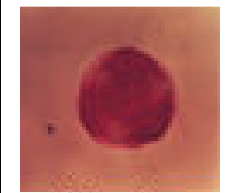
To follow the local pollen count, check out our website@
www.allergyasthmasi.com

Understanding pollen counts in Allergies and Asthma

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**Black Walnut
Pollen**



**Maple
Pollen**



Cedar Pollen

Each spring brings allergy symptoms to over tens of millions of seasonal allergy sufferers in the United States. Among the most common culprits are the various tree and grass pollens in some regions, weed pollens as well.

Pollens are tiny male cells that are carried by the wind to pollinate and continue the growth of new grasses, weeds and trees. It is these tiny pollen grains that cause seasonal symptoms such as sneezing, itchy eyes and wheezing for those with allergy tendencies. Wind is the major mechanism of dispersing tree, grass and weed pollens.

Molds represent another class of common airborne allergens seen each year throughout the spring, summer and fall in the United States. Mold spores are microscopic fungi that float in the air during many months of the year in most areas of the country. Outdoor mold counts peak during the warmer months.

Understanding the relationship between the level of pollen and mold spores measured in your particular area, and the pattern of allergy symptoms you experience, will help you and your doctor design a more effective treatment plan to control your allergy symptoms.

Pollen and mold counting methods

The counting of pollens and molds originated over 100 years ago as pollen hunters studied the quantity of the collected pollens on adhesive slides. Today, various methods are used to identify and measure the concentration of airborne pollens and mold spores. A standard period of sampling is 24 hours, and the total number of individual type/pollen grains per 24-hour period is reported as the "pollen count."

This information allows individuals with seasonal allergies to better adjust their outdoor activities on days with higher pollen counts, and reduce related complaints such as sneezing, stuffy nose and itchiness of the eyes and throat.

Allergy sufferers should first see an allergist/immunologist to be tested, and identify which pollens and molds may be causing their discomfort. An allergist/immunologist can help develop strategies to avoid plants that cause allergic sensitivity reactions, as well as identifying trees, shrubs, plants and grasses found to be less problematic for allergy sufferers. For example, if you're a gardener, you can select the best plants that will cause the smallest impact on your seasonal suffering. But remember, pollen can travel miles with the wind, so it is impossible to completely avoid pollen exposure by re-landscaping your yard.

Weather changes and pollen counts

Climate and weather conditions such as hot, dry and windy days mean greater amounts of pollen and molds dispersed into the noses, eyes and lungs of sufferers. Allergy pollen counts and allergy symptoms tend to decrease on days that are wet, cloudy and windless. A prolonged rain is nature's way of washing pollen from the air. But beware of spring thunderstorms. They may actually stir up the pollen and make symptoms worse.

Pollen and mold affect asthma

Most people do not even realize that allergies trigger their asthma, but more than half of patients with asthma have allergies. For patients with both allergic rhinitis and asthma, control is often better if nasal symptoms are also controlled.

Escaping your allergy symptoms

Unfortunately, moving to another part of the country to try to escape seasonal exposure to outdoor allergens is rarely successful. There are numerous similar allergens found in other pollinating plants in other parts of the country, although pollen levels are typically lower near a body of water such as a lake or ocean beach.

An allergy sufferer may also develop allergies to airborne pollens in a new area after a period of exposure, and the familiar seasonal itching and sneezing won't be far behind.

Allergy Season Survival Kit

What's your poison? Ragweed, mold, tree pollen, dust mites, pet dander, or any combination of some--if not all--of these common allergens. Whether it's the runny nose; the sinus headaches; the itchy, watery eyes; or the cacophony of sneezes that plague you, seasonal allergies can make your life miserable! While we can't prevent your allergies, we can help you lessen their symptoms with the following checklist of supplies to have on hand.

ESSENTIALS:

First Aid Supplies:

Sting kit

For treating bee stings and bug bites

Medicines: Over the counter or prescription antihistamines
Topical steroids i.e.: Hydrocortisone
NSAIDS i.e.: Motrin
Epi Pens if anaphylaxis

Acetaminophen

Ideal for treating headaches brought on by inflamed sinuses.

Antihistamine

Over-the-counter meds like Benadryl help to reduce watery, itchy eyes and runny noses as well as alleviate the swelling of stings and bites--they may, however, cause drowsiness. Check with your physician for one of the newer, non-drowsy antihistamine medications like Claritin, Allegra or Xyzal.

Decongestant

Relieves nasal congestion and pressure so you can breathe easier (discourage daily, long term use).

Eye drops

You want a brand that will not only treat redness, but will also relieve the itch and burn brought on by allergies. Try Similasan Homeopathic Drops for Allergies, they won't over dry your eyes.

Nasal spray

Moisturize your irritated nose while loosening mucus secretions with a saline-based nasal spray. Avoid decongestant nasal sprays which can be drying to the nose and habit forming.

Home Supplies:

❑ Pillow encasement and mattress pad covers

Dust mites are very common allergens. They thrive in places like your bedding and carpeting. These durable covers can help to protect you and your family by avoiding the mite allergy.

❑ HEPA Air filters

Reduces airborne allergens and asthma triggers in your home. Keep it clean and change filters regularly for maximum results.

❑ De-humidifier

If you live in a damp environment and are allergic to mold or mildew, this will help keep the air dry--which will keep mold and mildew at bay.

❑ Peak air flow meter

Help the asthmatic in your household monitor his respiratory capacity and stop an attack before it starts--especially on high pollen count days.

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*DANDERS, POLLENS
AND
MOLDS,
OH MY!!!!*

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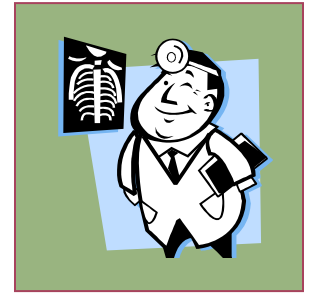
Frequently asked questions of the Doctor...

What does it mean when a product is labeled "Hypoallergenic"?

"Hypo" means "under" or "less than," so "hypoallergenic" means a product is less likely to trigger an allergic reaction.

Many products that we use every day, such as cleansers and soaps, deodorants, makeup, and even mouthwash, have ingredients that can irritate the skin or act as antigens (substances that act as an allergy trigger). Exposure of the skin to these ingredients -- most often fragrances and chemicals used as preservatives -- can lead to a condition called contact dermatitis. Contact dermatitis appears as areas of redness, itching, and swelling on the skin, and sometimes as a rash or blisters.

Many manufacturers of cosmetics and cleaning supplies now market their products as "hypoallergenic," meaning the products do not contain ingredients that are known to cause irritation or allergic reactions. However, manufacturers are not required to prove the claim that their products are hypoallergenic and there are currently no regulations or standards for manufacturers to follow. **Buyer beware!!**



Frequently asked questions of the Experts...

When should I call Allergy & Asthma versus call my Primary Physician?

If your allergies or asthma are not responding to your current medication or treatment plan.

If you have hives or a skin condition that you suspect may be allergy related.

If you have chronic sinusitis (that could indicate an underlying allergy).

If you have acute sinusitis or a respiratory illness and you cannot get a timely appointment with your primary care physician or if you prefer to see Allergy & Asthma.



Spring Break Office Hours

Bloomington Shot Hours Only

**March 11th 8:00 -12:30
2:00 -4:30**
**March 13th 10:00-12:30
2:00- 6:00**

Bedford Shot Hours Only

March 13th 12:00 – 4:20
In the office other days for prescription refills.

SHOT KID WINNERS!!

January

*Ceiera Broukal
Audrey Cotton
Sadie Johnson*

February

*Ceira Fuller
Max Terrell
Emerson Bergman*

