

Spring Allergies



Spring is in the air, and so are billions of tiny pollens that trigger allergy symptoms in millions of people.

This condition is called seasonal allergic rhinitis, commonly referred to as hay fever.

Hay fever can affect your quality of life. It can lead to sinus infections, can disrupt your sleep and affect your ability to learn at school or be productive at work.

Symptoms include:

- Itching in the nose, roof of the mouth, throat, eyes
- Sneezing
- Stuffy nose (congestion)
- Runny nose
- Tearing eyes
- Dark circles under the eyes

DID YOU KNOW?

- Hay fever cannot be diagnosed by history alone. An allergist/immunologist can diagnose your allergies, and determine the specific triggers that cause them, through simple tests.
- If you have hay fever, keep track of pollen counts in your area by subscribing to the National Allergy Bureau's email alerts.
- Allergy shots (immunotherapy) have been proven to provide long-term relief of allergic rhinitis symptoms.

Depending on where you live, there are generally three pollen seasons. The start and end dates of these seasons, as well as the specific plants, vary based on the climate.

- Trees generally pollinate in the spring. Birch, cedar, cottonwood and pine are big allergy triggers.
- Grass releases its pollen in the summer. Timothy and Johnson, and Rye grasses are examples of allergens in this category.
- Weeds cause hay fever in the fall. Ragweed is the biggest offender as it can grow in nearly every environment.

Avoiding your allergy triggers is the best way to reduce symptoms:

- Limit outdoor activities during days with high pollen counts.
- Keep windows closed (at home or in the car) to keep pollens out.
- Take a shower after coming indoors. Otherwise, pollen in your hair may bother you all night.

To the Point

Hay fever symptoms will generally end as soon as exposure to the allergen ends.

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