

## Seasonal Allergies and Your Health

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[www.askmd.com](http://www.askmd.com)

It is spring time and that can sometimes be associated with a high incidence of allergies. About 1 in 5 Americans suffers from some type of allergy. Common forms of allergies are triggered by food or pets, but a higher incidence of allergies are **seasonal**, triggered by grass, weeds, pollinating plants, trees, and molds. Spring and the Fall are the most prevalent seasons for allergies.

### What is an Allergy?

An allergy is simply an immune system response to a trigger. A trigger such as Pollen is introduced to your body by inhaling, ingesting, or otherwise touching your skin. Your body's immune system reacts to it by producing substances to fight the allergens. In doing this, some chemicals (called histamines) are released into your blood stream. When that happens, your body usually displays the symptoms of an allergy sufferer.

Not everyone suffers from allergies, and the degree to which people suffer also varies. Allergies are not considered hereditary, but if both of your parents suffer from allergies, you have a much greater chance of suffering too.

### What are the Symptoms of an Allergy?

Seasonal Allergy sufferers can display a multitude of symptoms, but the most common ones are: itchy and watery eyes, sneezing and coughing, respiratory congestion, feeling tired or run down, and a skin rash.

### What Can You Do to Avoid and Treat Allergies?

- Monitor in touch with your local air quality by visiting:  
<http://www.webmd.com/allergies/healthtool-air-quality-index>
- If you suffer from allergies to pollen and plants, avoid going outdoors for extended periods of time. Usually, after a nice rain, the air is washed and the amount of allergens in the air is reduced.
- See your health care provider about your allergies and determine which medications (namely antihistamines) might be most effective.
- Talk to your doctor about taking preventative medications, or even making changes to your diet that may inhibit or reduce your allergy suffering.

**For more information, go to:**

[www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)