

What You Need to Know About Allergies

Allergies happen when your body overreacts to certain things in the air. Depending on what you are allergic to, you may have allergies during certain times of the year like during the spring, summer or fall seasons (seasonal allergies) or all year round (perennial allergies).

Some of the most common symptoms of allergies are:

Runny and stuffy nose	Watery eyes	Itchy nose, eyes, and ears
Sneezing	Coughing	Problems with smell

How to Manage Your Allergies

1. Avoid the things that cause your symptoms.

- Keep windows closed and air conditioner on when pollen is high.
- Remove carpet in your bedrooms if possible.
- Wash curtains and bedding with hot water regularly.
- Vacuum often.

3. If the steroid sprays don't give you enough relief, add an over-the-counter antihistamine pill.

- This combination may give you more relief than using the steroid spray alone.
- These are the best options for most people:
 - Cetirizine (Zyrtec)
 - Fexofenadine (Allegra)
 - Loratadine (Claritin)

Note: If you are already taking one of these antihistamines and it's working, there is NO need to switch or add a steroid or an antihistamine spray.

2. If you still have symptoms, consider an over-the-counter nasal steroid spray.

- It helps reduce congestion, sneezing, dripping of mucus in the back of your nose or throat.
- These are good options for most people:
 - Fluticasone propionate (Flonase)
 - Triamcinolone acetonide (Nasacort)
 - Mometasone furoate (Nasonex)

4. If that doesn't work, ask your doctor about trying a different medication or treatment.

- Other types of allergy treatments, both over-the-counter and by prescription can help you.
- Some people need to try several treatments before they find one that works for them.

Note: Do not take any over-the-counter medicine on a regular basis without talking with your doctor.

What Can Cause Allergies?

Seasonal Allergies:



Pollen from grass, trees, or weeds

Perennial Allergies:



Mold



Dust mites



Pet dander