

When Seasonal Allergies Strike

By Heather Bremner Claverie



ACHOO! RUNNY noses. Itchy, red-rimmed eyes. Breathing issues. Seasonal allergies are no joke. Millions of individuals, at least one in six Americans, suffer from this seriously annoying affliction, according to the National Institute of Environmental Sciences. The season when allergies are most likely to strike is when flowers and plants burst into bloom in the spring. And when the wind kicks up? Expect to hear lots of sniffing and sneezing.

All About Allergic Rhinitis

Also referred to as hay fever — a term that heralds back to the 1800s when they thought that the smell of hay was the cause — allergic rhinitis, commonly known as seasonal allergies, is triggered by pollen flying off of trees, weeds and grasses during spring and summer.

So, why does that powdery substance lead to sneeze attacks, itchy eyes and even asthma in some people, but others are completely fine? It comes down to

the immune system. Bodies that mistake pollen for a dangerous substance fight back with various symptoms. If the symptoms occur only during the spring or summer months, it's considered seasonal allergic rhinitis, while year-round issues are labeled perennial allergic rhinitis.

Virus, Cold or Allergies?

Sounds gross, but phlegm often tells the story. Clear mucus is usually an indicator of allergies, while green- or yellow-tinged phlegm may signal a virus or cold. In addition, allergic coughs tend to feel like a tickle in the throat. Why? Because pollen irritates the nose's lining, which in turn signals the nasal passage to protect itself with watery mucus. Once that mucus starts dripping down the back of the throat (a.k.a. post-nasal drip), the tickling sensation kicks in. Another tell-tale sign of allergies? Itchiness. That's because the allergens attack the eyes, ears, nose and throat, which can lead to sneezing, coughing, bloody noses, irritated eyes and more. The good news? Seasonal allergies rarely cause sore throats, chills or body aches.

Treating the Symptoms

Remember when the only choices for treating seasonal allergies were to stay inside, suffer through them or take medications that made you so drowsy you could barely function? That's no longer the case. Research in this arena has led to an array of solid treatments for seasonal allergies. Medications such as Claritin, Allegra, Xyzal and Zyrtec have reduced the sleepy side effects. For itchy, watery eyes, antihistamine drops

such as Zaditor can do the trick, while Flonase or Nasacort can help tame nasal inflammation.

For those looking for a drug-free option, Ayurvedic medicine may be the answer. According to this ancient system of medicine, cleansing nasal passages daily with a saltwater solution using a neti pot can do wonders.

Immunotherapy is a newer form of preventive treatment that involves injecting patients with small amounts of the offending allergen and then increasing the amount over time. The incremental amounts allow the body to become less susceptible to the allergen, leading to the production of an antibody that reduces the symptoms when the allergen is encountered again in the future.

Sublingual tablets, which were approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 2014, are another option. Patients who opt for this treatment dissolve the tablets under their tongue on a daily basis several months before allergy season. Currently, only grass and ragweed pollens can be treated with this therapy.

Wearing a mask or handkerchief around the nose and mouth can also help ward off allergens.

Never Fear!

With so many options to manage the symptoms of seasonal allergies, there's no reason to fear spring because of that pesky pollen. Don't sweat the season! Try a new remedy and start wiping away those seasonal allergies for good.

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Soothe Your Sinuses

Indoor air is often sapped of moisture thanks to heaters, fans and air conditioners, which can exacerbate seasonal allergies and cause a variety of issues from dry throats and itchy skin to bloody noses and headaches. When allergies strike, add some moisture to the air with the Pure Enrichment MistAire Silver Ultrasonic Cool Mist Humidifier. This tear drop-shaped



humidifier moisturizes the air for up to 25 hours, and its rotating nozzle makes it simple to adjust mist direction and settings. [\\$39.99; www.target.com/p/pure-enrichment-mistaire-silver-ultrasonic-cool-mist-humidifier/-/A-54387645](https://www.target.com/p/pure-enrichment-mistaire-silver-ultrasonic-cool-mist-humidifier/-/A-54387645)

Spray Away the Irritants

Trying to function with itchy, watery eyes and a runny nose is basically impossible. Enter Flonase Allergy Relief Spray.



Two squirts of this allergy spray provides round-the-clock relief even during the height of allergy season. The best part? This medication won't cause drowsiness, and because it provides multi-symptom relief, you don't need a basket of additional products to get through the allergy season. Just grab Flonase and go.

[\\$21.30; www.amazon.com/dp/B088WKBSP7](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B088WKBSP7)

Shopping Guide to Treating Allergies



Sweeten the Season

A lollipop that can ward off pollen? That's the secret sauce behind Wedderspoon Organic Manuka Honey Pops. Manuka honey, produced from bees in New Zealand that feast on the nectar of the manuka bush, contains significant amounts of antibacterial compounds that can help alleviate seasonal allergies. The lollipops come in orange, grape and raspberry flavors, or try the honey drops available in fennel and cinnamon or eucalyptus and bee propolis.

[\\$12.99 for a pack of 24; www.amazon.com/dp/B074JGKNJ5](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B074JGKNJ5)

Trap the Pollen in Its Tracks

If pollen and dust are circulating in your indoor environment, there's not much you can do to ease symptoms. Rest easy by trapping those seasonal allergy triggers with an AirDoctor. A 2020 study in the *Yonsei Medical Journal* revealed that air purifiers significantly reduced the symptoms of those suffering from seasonal allergies, as well as decreased their need for medications to manage them. Placing one in every room can do wonders, but at the very least, placing one in your bedroom will help you snooze in comfort. [\\$399 and up; www.airdoctorpro.com/purifiers](https://www.airdoctorpro.com/purifiers)



Defend Yourself

Take two of this synergistic blend of antioxidants, bioflavonoids, herbs and enzymes to reduce seasonal allergy symptoms. Cymbiotika Allergy Defense boosts the immune system and reduces inflammation, all a necessity when pollen, mold and dust are attacking. Plus, this all-natural remedy won't cause drowsiness or other undesirable side effects. [\\$42; cymbiotika.com/collections/immunity/products/allergy-defense#description](https://cymbiotika.com/collections/immunity/products/allergy-defense#description)

Tame the Inflammation

Add the MSM Morning Mix from Raw Revelations to your morning routine to detoxify, hydrate and nourish your cells. A potent blend of organic sulfur (MSM) and superfruits, it helps alleviate allergy symptoms associated with inflammation. Simply stir a teaspoon into water or juice for relief from a variety of allergies and ailments. Increase the dosage for other issues such as chronic pain.

[\\$30; rawrevelations.com/msm-powder](https://rawrevelations.com/msm-powder)

