

The Asthma & Allergy Center



Take Control of Peak Allergy Season

The peak of spring allergy season has either hit or is about to hit your area of the country. Trees are budding, flowers are blooming and while most people are grabbing their ball and bat to head outside, allergy sufferers are grabbing a box of tissues.

Allergy sufferers are all too familiar with peak allergy season as a time when they can be forced indoors, missing out on a fun soccer game and strolls in the park due to their allergy symptoms.

When to seek help

Pollen, trees and ragweed are allergens that could cause an allergic outbreak. If an allergic outbreak occurs, it is best to consult an Asthma and Allergy Center clinician. An allergist/immunologist is the best qualified specialist to help patients who suffer from allergies. Symptoms of an allergic reaction:

- Stuffy or runny nose
- Sneezing
- Ear congestion
- Itchy, watery eyes
- Sore throat
- Wheezing
- Coughing
- Shortness of breath

Dos and don'ts

The following dos and don'ts are suggested by the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI) to help lessen exposure to pollens and molds that could trigger allergy symptoms:

DO a thorough spring cleaning. Windows, book shelves and air conditioning vents collected dust and mold throughout the winter that can provoke allergy symptoms.

DO keep windows closed at night to prevent pollens or molds from drifting into your home. Instead, if needed, use air conditioning, which cleans, cools and dries the air.

DO minimize early morning activity. Pollen is usually emitted between 5 a.m. and 10 a.m.

DO keep your car windows closed when traveling.

DO shower and wash your hair every night before going to bed.

DO try to stay indoors when the pollen count or humidity is reported to be high, and on windy days when dust and pollen are blown about.

DO view the pollen count in your area. Visit the National Allergy Bureau (NAB) Web site at www.aaaai.org/nab/.

DO take a vacation during the height of the pollen season to a more pollen-free area, such as the beach or sea.

DO take medications prescribed by your Asthma and Allergy Center clinician regularly, in the recommended dosage.

DON'T take more medication than recommended in an attempt to lessen your symptoms.

DON'T mow lawns or be around freshly cut grass. Mowing stirs up pollens and molds.

DON'T rake leaves, as this also stirs up molds.

DON'T hang sheets or clothing outside to dry. Pollens and molds may collect in them.

DON'T grow too many, or over water, indoor plants if you are allergic to mold. Wet soil encourages mold growth.