

Allergy Facts- Nothing to Sneeze At!

With the onset of another allergy season millions of Americans are keeping their tissue boxes close by. The budding trees and blooming flowers give rise to an increase in itchy, watery eyes, sneezing and other allergy symptoms.

To ease the symptoms of allergies, sufferers should avoid common irritants like tobacco smoke, automobile exhaust, hair spray, and perfumes. Do a thorough spring cleaning—windows, book shelves and air conditioning vents collect dust and mold throughout the winter that can provoke allergy symptoms.

If you suffer from hay fever allergies you should wash their hair at night. Why? To remove pollen and prevent it from settling on bedding and pillows. Wash your hands frequently and try to avoid going outdoors when pollen counts are high.

Ask your allergist about prescription medications to help prevent allergy attacks. Patients typically start taking these types of medications about a week before peak allergy season and at least 30 minutes prior to outdoor activity. Some allergy medications, such as antihistamines, may cause drowsiness, so if you need to be alert ask your doctor about the newer types that have fewer side effects.

Additional helpful hints:

- Vacuum at least twice a week.
- Keep car windows closed during peak allergy season and point air conditioning vents away from your face.
- When pollen counts are high, minimize outdoor activity during the peak pollen times between 10 am and 4 pm.
- Avoid open windows or fans that may draw pollen inside.
- Pollen can cling to pets, so keep them off of furniture and out of the bedroom.
- Wear a filter mask when mowing the lawn or doing gardening.