

Allergic Rhinitis (Allergies)

Allergic rhinitis is a common disorder of the respiratory system. Seasonal rhinitis may also be referred to as Hay Fever or Allergies. Symptoms may be caused by indoor or outdoor allergens and often vary from season to season. Common allergens include pollen, mold and pet dander.



Symptoms:

- Nasal congestion
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Itching
- Itchy and/or watery eyes
- May follow a seasonal pattern

Self-care measures:

- Use oral antihistamines containing cetirizine, loratadine, or fexofenadine for runny nose, itching, and sneezing. Brand names include Zyrtec®, Claritin®, and Allegra®.
- Use over the counter corticosteroid nasal sprays (Flonase® or Nasacort®). These are most effective when used daily.
- Use a product with a decongestant such as pseudoephedrine or phenylephrine for nasal congestion
- Avoid allergens
 - Stay indoors on dry, windy days
 - Remove clothes worn outside and shower to remove pollen from hair and skin
 - Use the air conditioner when possible
 - Use a dehumidifier to keep indoor air dry
 - Use a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter

When to see a medical provider:

- If you are having any signs of a severe allergic reaction seek immediate medical attention
Signs of an allergic reaction include any of the follow: swelling to the throat, loss of consciousness, dizziness (or lightheaded), shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, a skin rash, or a rapid or weak pulse
- If self-care is not providing symptom relief.