

Seasonal Allergy Solution Guide

HELP! I Have Allergies All Year Long! A Guide to Seasonal Allergy Solutions

Seasonal allergies, contrary to popular belief, do not just occur in the fall and spring. Every single season has its own set of allergies that need to be addressed. This is a guide to each season and how the different types of allergies can be alleviated.

Spring Allergies

Finally the world awakes from its freeze! It's time to frolic and play outdoors as the birds sing and the trees awaken. But all of a sudden, you begin sneezing uncontrollably! Spring allergies are upon you! Spring allergies are, by and large, due to plants beginning to pollinate. Some weeds pollinate in the spring, but trees are the biggest culprits. Oaks, Elms, Poplar, Sycamore, Birch, Olive and Ash trees are the main pollinators during the spring season. Pine trees can also go through a pollination period during this time.

Summer Allergies

In the summer, pollen can continue to be a problem if you live in a well-forested area. However, there are many other things that cause allergies to trigger. In more humid areas, mold spores are a major problem. Grasses come out at this time of year and are the source of many types of allergies from contact allergies to inhalation allergies. Fragrance sensitivities are also key as everyone slathers themselves in sunscreen.

Fall Allergies

Fall allergies are the ones that most people talk about. Weeds release a great deal of pollen at this time of year, especially ragweed. Ragweed allergies are also known as hayfever. Hayfever accounts for about 75% of all allergic reactions in the fall. Other weeds such as goldenrod and sagebrush, also cause fall allergies with their pollen. Outdoor mold can thrive until a frost happens. Decaying leaves can be a place where mold grows quickly and where pollen collects. For this reason, a person with allergies should not be jumping into piles of leaves!

Winter Allergies

Luckily for those with pollen allergies, winter is a good time for you. The pollen has disappeared and you should feel a great deal of relief. For those who are sensitive to other allergens most typically found indoors. Since people spend a great deal of time indoors during this time of year, indoor allergy sensitivities skyrocket. Typical allergens are animal dander, indoor mold, dust and dust mites.

Dealing with Seasonal Allergies

Most seasonal allergies are caused by airborne particulate matter. Pollen, mold spores and dander are all particles that are small enough and light enough to remain part of the environmental milieu without ever touching the ground. Although many of these allergens are sourced from the outdoors, all of these things have a way of getting into the house. While you are outside, the only way to really deal with your allergies is to perhaps take medication to combat the immune reaction of your body (anti-histamines). While you are indoors, however, you can alleviate allergy symptoms by investing in a good HEPA air purifier.

HEPA air purifiers are known for their ability to filter out very small particulate matter from the environment. Pollen can be from 10 – 1000 microns in diameter while mold spores are anywhere from 10 – 30 microns in diameter. Most of these particles cannot be seen with the naked eye, but must be viewed through a microscope. The human eye can see down to about 40 microns. The larger particles can be filtered with a prefilter that is rated for coarse particles.

HEPA air purifiers that are correctly matched to the room size will usually cycle air in the entire room at least 4-5 times. Medical grade HEPA filters can separate fine particles as small as 0.3 microns in diameter. If viruses and bacteria are also a problem for asthmatics, some air purifiers include a Titanium Oxide module which will kill microorganisms down to about 0.01 microns in diameter.