



EXPRESS SCRIPTS®



# Seasonal Allergies

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# What are allergies?

Allergies occur when your immune system overreacts to common substances found in your surroundings, such as pollen, animal dander or dust. Allergies can also be caused by certain foods and drugs as well as insect bites.



## Allergy symptoms

- Sneezing
- Itchy, red watery eyes
- Itchy throat
- Feeling of pressure on the cheeks and forehead
- Ear fullness and popping
- Runny nose
- Itchy nose
- Headache
- Congestion

## How to treat?

### Over-the-counter medications

Treatment is usually recommended when you don't feel better even after you have tried to avoid the allergens or when your allergies are interfering with your daily activities. **Always consult your pharmacist before getting any over-the-counter medications to ensure that the medication is safe and right for you.**

Antihistamines can be used to relieve symptoms of acute rhinitis. First-generation antihistamines such as Benadryl have a short duration of action and cause drowsiness. Second generation antihistamines such as Aerius (Desloratadine), Claritin (Loratadine) and Reactine (Cetirizine) have a longer duration of action.

## Prevention

- Try to avoid exposure to the allergen causing the allergies.
- If you are allergic to pollen, try to keep the doors and windows closed and check the pollen count before you go outdoors.
- If you are allergic to pet dander, the best choice is to give the animal away. If that is not possible, then try to keep the animal away from your bedroom and furniture. Get rid of litter boxes or keep them in an area that is not connected with the air supply in the rest of the house.

Product name	Adult dosing	Side effects
Reactine (Cetirizine)	5 to 10 mg per day	May cause drowsiness in some people at higher doses
Claritin (Loratadine)	10mg per day	Minimal side effects, may cause headache
Aerius (Desloratadine)	5mg per day	Minimal side effects, may cause headache
Benadryl (Diphenhydramine)	25mg to 50 mg every 6 to 8 hours (Maximum daily dose 300mg/day)	Sedation, drowsiness, dry mouth, dry eyes

## Prescription medications

Your doctor might recommend prescription therapy to help you manage your symptoms better once you have used over-the-counter medications with no relief. Talk to your pharmacist or other health care professional on how you can better manage your symptoms.

## Red flags – When to see the Doctor?

- You have trouble breathing
- You feel dizzy and light headed – signs of blood pressure dropping
- Child under two years of age
- There is no improvement despite using over-the-counter antihistamines for two weeks
- If you don't know what is causing your allergies

### Tips

- If you are allergic to pollen, try to stay indoors when pollen count is high
- Shower after outdoor activities, especially during allergy season when pollen count is high
- Wash bedding in hot water once a week
- Keep windows closed to keep pollen out
- Keep your auto injectors with you always
- Keep pets away from your bedroom and furniture

*Disclaimer: The information found in this brochure is not intended to replace the advice of your pharmacist or physician. If you have any questions specific to your health, please contact your healthcare provider.*

#### References:

1. Common seasonal allergy triggers. American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology. <http://acaai.org/allergies/types/seasonal>. Accessed January 19, 2016.
2. Kerr M. Seasonal allergies. Healthline. <http://www.healthline.com/health/allergies/seasonal-allergies>. Published February 10, 2014. Accessed January 19, 2016.
3. Stoppler MC. Hay fever. MedicineNet. [http://www.medicinenet.com/hay\\_fever/page4.htm](http://www.medicinenet.com/hay_fever/page4.htm). Updated August 18, 2015. Accessed January 19, 2016.