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Allergy Season and Kids: What You Need to Know



Judy Koutsky
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Most people know that once spring hits, allergies ramp up, but what allergies occur at what time of year?



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Allergy season can put a damper on summer fun, no matter your age. Children can begin to suffer from allergy symptoms as early as a year old, although many children do not show symptoms until they are older, says [Dr. Joy Greene](#), an assistant professor of pharmacy at High Point University School of Pharmacy. She notes that, "Genetics and exposure to the allergen play an important role in symptom severity and response to treatment. Although some children do outgrow certain allergies, data shows that more children are suffering with allergies, and less are outgrowing them."

If your child does have an allergy, how likely is it that she's allergic to more than one thing? "Many kids are allergic to multiple pollens, mold, trees and grasses," says [Dr. Dina Kulik](#), a pediatric physician at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children and owner of Kindercare Pediatrics.

Does a Particular Allergy Present in a Specific Month?

The answer? It depends. Because there is such a vast array of allergens, a particular allergy season depends on where you live and what you are allergic to. However, Dr. Greene notes when certain allergens are most prominent:

- **January**

Since kids are typically outside less, indoor allergens such as dust are prominent now. Pet allergens from indoor pets are also more problematic in this month.

- **February**

Mold and dust are common, and in warmer states, tree pollen begins to arrive.

- **March**

Tree pollen is the most common allergen in March, and in warmer states, mold and dust are also prominent.

The temperature is beginning to warm up and people allergic to tree pollen and grasses begin to experience symptoms.

- **April**

Flowers are beginning to bloom and so are the flower allergens. Tree pollen is still prevalent as well as allergens in various grasses.

- **May**

Tree pollen begins to taper off, but can still be problematic. Grass pollen becomes more problematic.

- **June**

Grass pollen is at a high, but other allergens tend to lessen due to the hotter temperatures.

- **July**

Pollen season is almost over, but out come the fungus spores and seeds. Folks who suffer with mold allergies may experience severe symptoms.

- **August**

Mold spores are most problematic during August.

- **September**

Ragweed is commonly seen in September.

- **October**

Fall allergens are improving, but mold spores can still be problematic.

- **November**

This is one of the best months for people who suffer from allergies.

- **December**

Another good month for allergy sufferers, but Christmas trees can cause symptoms for some.

Of course, where you live geographically plays a role in seasonal allergies. "For example, tree season starts in January in Texas," says [Dr. Kevin McGrath](#), an allergist and spokesperson for the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. He adds, "Seasons for all allergens are longer as you go more south." If you live in a state like Florida, your child's allergies may be acting up a lot.

"In some states, pollens are year round. For example, grass pollinates in Florida 12 months a year," says [Dr. Jonathan Field](#), a board-certified doctor in allergy and immunology and co-chief at Allergy and Asthma Care of New York.

While it depends on where you live, in general, winter months typically have more indoor allergens like dust and mold; spring and summer are typically tree and grass pollen and the fall is usually ragweed, says Tonya Winders, the CEO of [Allergy & Asthma Network](#). She suggests looking at this [map](#) to find out what allergies affect which part of the country.

Tips for Helping Your Child's Allergies

- **Lessen indoor allergens**

"In the summer, keep the windows closed and use the AC instead," says Dr. Kulik. She adds, "Clean carpets often and avoid excess drapery and rugs."

- **Protect the eyes**

"Using a cold compress on the eyes will provide quick, temporary relief from itching and redness by constricting the blood vessels that are releasing histamine in the eyes," says optometrist Dr. David Ardaya of the [California Optometric Association](#). He adds that parents should put their kids in large sunglasses. "Protecting your eyes when you are outside can keep pollen from getting into the eye and irritating it."

- **Get plenty of fish oil**

"Omega-3 fish oil has anti-inflammatory properties that can help reduce redness and irritation," says Dr. Ardaya. Fish such as salmon, mackerel and sardines are especially high in omega-3s, but there are also several kid-oriented supplements available. He adds that maintaining a healthy diet foods rich in antioxidants including spinach, kale, broccoli, carrots and red peppers helps to improve the immune system and combat the symptoms of eye allergies.

- **Declutter your home**

"Toys, knick-knacks and other types of clutter can be traps for dust and other allergens," says Dr. Field.

Need more allergy info? Here's [3 Cleaning Tips to Ease Allergies](#).

Judy Koutsky is the former Editorial Director of KIWI magazine, a green parenting publication. She was also Executive Editor of [Parenting.com](#), AOL Parent and [BabyTalk.com](#).

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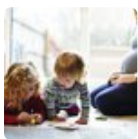
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