

ALLERGIES – COMMON TYPES & TREATMENT

Allergies are the Fifth Leading Chronic Disease in the U.S.

An Allergy is the Immune System's Reaction to Foreign Material Not Typically Harmful to Your Body

Your immune system is well-equipped to keep you healthy by fighting infection and other harmful pathogens. When it detects anything that it determines as harmful to your body, it attacks the substance. The attack response may involve inflammation, sneezing, an increase in mucous production and other symptoms.

For people who suffer from allergies, the body's immune system confuses harmless substances with outside invaders threatening the body.

01 | Types of Allergies

There are many common allergies, some of which are listed below:

- **Pollen** – seasonal allergic rhinitis or hay fever is the result of increased pollen in the air. Symptoms may include sneezing, congestion and itchy, watery eyes as well as asthma symptoms.
- **Dust Mites** – these microscopic mites are found in fibers of household objects and thrive in warm, humid areas. Symptoms are similar to pollen allergies.
- **Mold** – mold spores float in the air like pollen and can trigger allergies. Mold is more common in damp areas such as basements, bathrooms, hay, and mulch or leaf piles.
- **Animal Dander** – some people suffer from an allergy to the protein secreted by the sweat glands or saliva of an animal.
- **Latex** – repeated exposure to latex can result in a latex allergy. Symptoms include skin rash, hives, eye and skin irritation and wheezing.

- **Food** – the immune system sometimes develops a specific antibody to a certain food. Food allergies are often severe and can be life-threatening. Common food allergies include shellfish, peanuts and tree-nuts.

02 | Diagnosis & Treatment

If you are suffering from common allergy symptoms, make an appointment with an allergy/immunology specialist. Allergy skin testing can be used to identify the allergens causing your symptoms.

If you test positive for allergies, your medical provider may prescribe antihistamines, decongestant medication and/or a topical nasal steroid spray. For more severe cases, immunotherapy (allergy shot therapy) may be recommended.

Allergies are a chronic condition – it is important to follow your treatment plan as directed. For more information on allergies and treatment options, please visit: www.aaaai.org

Did You Know?
Over 50 million Americans suffer from allergies

References

<http://www.healthline.com/health/allergies>

<http://www.webmd.com/allergies/guide/allergies-treatment-care>