

Advice

Identifying the source of the problem is a step toward controlling your allergies!

Possible allergy-aggravating factors:

- Perfume
- Pollution
- Cold air
- Humidity
- Cigarette smoke
- Wind
- Wood fires

An ounce of prevention... ...is worth a pound of cure!

Some tips to keep symptoms to a minimum:

- Keep doors and windows closed if possible.
- Before going to bed, wash your face and body if you've been outside.
- Avoid mowing the lawn.
- Stay away from ragweed.
- Wear glasses to protect your eyes from pollen.
- Don't dry your clothes or sheets outside.

Main treatments

Antihistamines attack the mechanism that causes the allergy. They relieve sneezing, runny noses and itchy eyes and throats.

Decongestants relieve the symptom of nasal congestion. Often used with antihistamines, they're offered in syrup, as pills, and in nasal mists.

Ask your pharmacist which over-the-counter medication might help you.

If symptoms persist and affect your quality of life, and if off-the-shelf medication doesn't help or you can't cope with its side effects, consult your doctor. He may prescribe other medication. Some allergies may require injections to adjust your system so that it no longer reacts to certain allergens (immunotherapy or desensitization).

Seasonal allergies



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Your pharmacist, an accessible
health professional: talk to him!

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What are seasonal allergies?

Often known as “hay fever,” seasonal allergies or rhinitis are a strong immune system reaction to a foreign substance – what we call allergens. Normally they don’t pose any real danger to most people, but can cause the inflammation of tissues like those of the nose, eyes, skin or lungs.

In Quebec, the following substances can cause allergies from spring through fall:

- **pollen** from trees, often in the spring;
- **grasses** in the summer (straw, wheat, corn);
- **herbaceous** plants in the fall (grass, ragweed).

Trees	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Alder												
Birch												
Oak												
Maple												
Elm												
Poplar												
Ragweed												
Grasses												

The Weather Network, www.theweathernetwork.com. Pollen Report

Weather conditions also have a profound effect on how much pollen is in the air. Frequent rain can keep the pollen on the ground, while the wind is the sworn enemy of all those suffering from seasonal allergies.

Symptoms

Hay fever is so common that almost everybody can recognize its main symptoms:

- Nasal or sinus congestion
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Itchy, red, and tearful eyes
- Wheezing breath
- Cough
- Headache
- Some ear obstruction, especially with children

Allergies or cold?

- Allergy and common cold symptoms are confusingly similar. But when rhinitis (the acute or chronic inflammation of tissues inside the nose) is caused by a **virus**, that’s when we call it a **cold**.
- Allergies are not caused by a virus.
- Unlike a cold, allergies can be detected through **skin tests** (usually done on the forearm) or blood tests.
- While cold symptoms usually diminish after a few days, allergies persist for as long as the allergen is present.

Why me?

One person in 10 suffers from seasonal allergies in Quebec. Children and the elderly are the most affected.

... and why now?

You should know that seasonal allergies can crop up at any point in your life, regardless of your age and whether or not you’ve had allergies before.

