Seasonal allergies
Also called: hay fever

An allergic response causing itchy, watery eyes, sneezing, and other similar symptoms.

Very common
More than 3 million US cases per year

- Usually self-treatable
- Usually self-diagnosable
- Lab tests or imaging rarely required
- Chronic: can last for years or be lifelong

Allergic rhinitis occurs seasonally or year-round. Diagnosis involves history-taking, examination of the nasal passages, and sometimes skin testing.

Symptoms include sneezing, runny nose, and red, watery, and itchy eyes. Antihistamine medications can reduce symptoms.

Ages affected

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>0-2</td>
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<td>3-5</td>
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<td>6-13</td>
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Symptoms

Usually self-diagnosable
Symptoms include sneezing, runny nose, and red, watery, and itchy eyes.

People may experience:

Pain areas: in the ear

Nasal: congestion, loss of smell, redness, runny nose, post-nasal drip, sneezing, or stuffy nose

Eyes: itchiness, puffy eyes, redness, or watery eyes

Respiratory: breathing through the mouth or wheezing

Also common: coughing, fatigue, headache, itching, phlegm, or throat irritation
Treatments

Treatment consists of self care and antihistamines

Antihistamine medications can reduce symptoms.

Medications

Steroid: Modifies or simulates hormone effects, often to reduce inflammation or for tissue growth and repair.
- Fluticasone (Flonase Allergy Relief, 24 Hour Allergy Relief, Aller-Flo, Children's Flonase Allergy Rif, and Flovent HFA)
- Triamcinolone acetonide
- Budesonide (Pulmicort, Rhinocort Allergy, and Pulmicort Flexhaler)
- Beclomethasone dipropionate (Beconase AQ, QNASL, and Qvar)
- Flunisolide (Aerospan)
- Ciclesonide (Omnaris, Alvesco, and Zetonna)
- Mometasone

Antihistamine: Reduces or stops an allergic reaction.
- Loratadine (Claritin, Allergy Relief (loratadine), Claritin Liqui-Gel, Alavert, and Vicks ClearQuill Allergy)
- Desloratadine (Clarinex)
- Cetirizine (Zyrtec, Children's Cetirizine, Child Allergy Relief (cetirizine), All Day Allergy Relief (cetir), and Child's All Day Allergy (cetir))
- Fexofenadine (Aller Ease, Children's Wal-Fex, Children's Allegra Allergy, Allegra Allergy, and Wal-Fex Allergy)
- Levocetirizine (Xyzal)
- Azelastine (Astepro)

Decongestant: Relieves nasal congestion, swelling, and runny nose.
- Xylometazoline
- Oxymetazoline (Afrin, 12 Hour Nasal Spray, Afrin Sinus (oxymetazoline), Mucinex Sinus-Max, and Sinex Ultra Fine Mist 12-Hour)
- Pseudoephedrine (Sudafed, Sudosent, Valor-Tapp Decongestant, Children's Silfedrine, and Sinus 12 Hour)

Eye decongestant: Relieves redness and irritation in the eyes.
- Oxymetazoline (Afrin, 12 Hour Nasal Spray, Afrin Sinus (oxymetazoline), Mucinex Sinus-Max, and Sinex Ultra Fine Mist 12-Hour)
- Naphazoline (Clear Eyes Max Redness Relief, Redness Relief, Clear Eyes Redness Relief, Clear Eyes Itchy Eye Relief, and All Clear AR)

Bronchodilator: Helps open the airways of the lungs to make breathing easier.
- Ipratropium

Anti-Inflammatory: Prevents or counteracts swelling (inflammation) in joints and tissues.
- Cromolyn (NasalCrom, Gastrocrom, and Nasal Allergy Symptom Control)

Self-care

Avoid allergen: Staying away from triggers that can cause allergic reactions, such as pollen or certain foods.

Nasal washing: Rinsing the inside of the nose with warm salt water to flush out irritants and excess mucus. Often done using a neti pot or squeeze bottle.

Medical procedure
Desensitization: Reducing allergic reactions by injecting gradually increasing doses of the substance causing the reaction.

Specialists

Primary care provider (PCP): Prevents, diagnoses, and treats diseases.
Allergy & immunology doctor: Treats allergy and immune system disorders.
Pulmonologist: Treats respiratory tract diseases.
Otolaryngologist: Treats ear, nose, and throat disorders.

Consult a doctor for medical advice

Note: The information you see describes what usually happens with a medical condition, but doesn't apply to everyone. This information isn't medical advice, so make sure to contact a healthcare provider if you have a medical problem. If you think you may have a medical emergency, call your doctor or an emergency number immediately.

Sources: Mayo Clinic and others. Learn more