

Health Promotion in Motion



Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month

- About 35 million people in the US have **seasonal allergies** – and you may be one of them. If you are sneezing or have a stuffy or runny nose you may have seasonal allergies.
- **Asthma symptoms** include coughing, chest tightness, wheezing, shortness of breath, a night cough that keeps coming back, and frequent colds and/or bronchitis. **If you have missed work or have had to go to the Emergency Department because of these symptoms, it's time to see an allergy and asthma specialist.**
- **Symptoms of H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu)** are fever, lack of energy, loss of appetite, coughing – and sometimes runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. For more information go to <http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/DHHS> .

What You Can Do to Reduce Allergy Symptoms

- **Keep windows closed at night** to prevent pollens and molds from drifting into your home. If needed, use air conditioning, which cleans, cools, and dries the air.
- **Limit early-morning outdoor activities.** Pollen counts are highest between 5 and 10 AM when plants release pollen.
- **Keep your car windows closed.**
- Try to **stay indoors when pollen counts are high, humidity is high, and on windy days** when dust and pollen are stirred up.
- **Take your vacation during the height of the pollen season** – and go to a place with low pollen counts such as the beach or sea.
- **Take medicines** prescribed by your allergy physician **regularly – at the recommend dose.**
- Learn more about **pollen and mold counts** and **Air Quality Alert Days** – see page 2.



What to Avoid

- **Don't take more medicine than recommended.**
- **Mowing grass and raking leaves** stir up pollens and molds. Ask a family member without allergies to do these tasks for you. Avoid freshly cut grass.
- Don't **hang sheets or clothing outdoors** to dry. Pollens and molds may collect on them.
- **Wet soil** encourages mold growth. Don't grow too many indoor plants. Don't overwater your indoor plants if you are allergic to mold.



Pollen and Mold Counts Are Important

- Watch out for **grasses and low-growing weeds** that have dry, light pollen that can easily blow in the wind. That includes timothy, bermuda and some blue grasses; and ragweed in late summer and fall.
- **Tree pollens** that cause allergies include maple, oak, birch, and poplar.
- **Molds** are everywhere, any time of year. They are **outdoors** in soil, plant matter, and rotting wood. They can be found **indoors** in basements, bathrooms, carpets and upholstery.
- **Find out what's in the air – and adjust your plans for the day, if needed.**
 - Check out **mold and pollen counts** before you start your day. Go to <http://www.weather.com>, click on "**health**," and then "**allergies and pollen**."
 - **Particulate matter and ozone** may create poor-quality air – especially in the summer. Watch for **Air Quality Alert Days** at the NH Department of Environmental Services website: http://www2.des.state.nh.us/airdata/air_quality_forecast.asp



Work-Related Asthma

- Do you have asthma symptoms for the first time? Asthma symptoms include coughing, chest tightness, wheezing, shortness of breath, a night cough that keeps coming back, and frequent colds and/or bronchitis.
 - Do you find your symptoms are made worse at work?
 - Do your asthma symptoms get worse through the work week, improve on the weekend, and get worse again when you return to work?
 - Are you exposed to chemicals or other substances at work that make your asthma worse?
- You may have work-related asthma. Check with your health care provider.

Travel Tips

Do you plan to travel by car, bus, train, or plane? Will you stay in hotels or with family and friends? People with allergies or asthma need to plan ahead for:

- Dust mites and molds in carpeting, mattresses and upholstered furniture
- Tobacco smoke
- Pet dander
- Strong perfumes and odors

Learn new tips for traveling with allergies and asthma:

<http://www.aaaai.org/patients/publicedmat/tips/travelingwithallergies.stm>

For More Information



- NH Asthma Control Program
<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/DHHS/CDPC/asthma.htm>
- AsthmaNow NH
<http://www.asthmanow.net/>
- Breath New Hampshire
<http://www.breathenh.org>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/>
- National Asthma Education and Prevention Program
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/naepp/>