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A TIP FOR TENNESSEANS

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ASK THE EXPERT: SPRING ALLERGIES

It's springtime. The flowers are blooming. And so are your allergies. If you suffer from them, you want relief. So, what can you do about your symptoms? And what do you do if over-the-counter (OTC) meds stop working? We asked an allergy expert for answers.

What causes spring allergies?

A: Spring allergies tend to stem from tree pollen—not wood or leaves. Pollen is what trees release in the spring when they are trying to make more trees.

What are the symptoms of spring allergies?

A: Spring allergies tend to start with eye symptoms. Pollen has a good knack for getting in the eyes. And it can make them dry, itchy and watery. Shortly after that are the nasal symptoms—sneezing, congestion and post-nasal drip. It's a little like having a cold. Pollen can also cause asthma symptoms for those with the condition.

What treatments are available?

A: There are good, safe allergy treatments -- most of which are available over the counter. There are antihistamine tablets, which help itchy eyes, nose, and sneezing symptoms. A nasal spray is most effective at calming inflammation.

Can spring allergy symptoms be prevented?

A: Be ready for allergy season and start your medications a few weeks before the season gets here. For example, if the oak tree pollen starts to come down right at the end of February, then start mid-February. Take your nose spray regularly even though you're feeling well. Staying ahead of allergy season can help you get through it better.



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Sources: ShareCare Library

"5 Surprising Allergy Triggers." ShareCare, Web. 10 March 2017. <https://www.sharecare.com/health/allergy/slideshow/5-surprising-allergy-triggers> "What Are Allergy Shots (Immunotherapy)?" ShareCare, Web. 10 March 2017. <https://www.sharecare.com/health/allergies-treatments/what-are-allergy-shots-immunotherapy>

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