

Allergic Rhinitis (Nasal Allergies)

Your child has been diagnosed with allergic rhinitis. Along with medications recommended or prescribed by your doctor, avoidance of the allergens is extremely important to improve his or her symptoms. Please take a moment to read the following information about how to improve your environment whenever possible. For additional information on allergy management, please refer to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology at www.aaaai.org. Most allergen-reducing accessories can be bought at drugstores or through internet retailers.

Second-hand Smoke:

Smoke is extremely toxic to the nasal passages and makes allergy symptoms much worse. There should be no smoking in the home or car of a patient with airway allergies.

House Cleaning:

In general, the house should be cleaned of dust and pet hair. For your heating and A/C systems, use allergy filters that can be bought at all major hardware stores. Replace the filter in your vacuum cleaner with one made for allergens. Consider buying a HEPA filter for your house. Keep bathrooms free of mildew and use a dehumidifier to lower the molds in your house. You may need to have your air ducts inspected for mold growth. Keep the kitchen and garbage areas clean so that cockroaches and other pests will not be attracted.

For the particular allergies listed, take the following precautions:

Dust Mites

Vacuum the carpets in the bedroom every few days, or consider replacing them with hardwood floors. Use synthetic pillows instead of feathers. Purchase an allergy cover for your child's mattress. Wash the bed linens in HOT water every week to kill the dust mite eggs. Limit the number of stuffed animals in the bedroom to a few that can be washed with the laundry. Replace the filters in your heating and A/C system with allergen filters such as Filtrete® - these are available at all major hardware stores.

Pet Dander

If you must keep a pet your child is allergic to, please keep it outside whenever possible. Bathe the animal weekly and keep it off the furniture as much as possible. Keep it out of the child's bedroom and vacuum the carpets and wash the sheets frequently.

Molds and Pollens: Ragweed, Pigweed, other Grasses, Trees

The counts for molds and grasses are usually displayed on the television news weather segment or on internet news sites. When counts are high or during the seasons they are known to be high, limit outdoor exposure time. For mold allergies, refer to the "House Cleaning" section above.

Keep the house and car windows closed with the air conditioning on. Use allergen filters at home for your heating and A/C systems (see above) and consider buying a HEPA filter. Clean the bedroom floors and wash the sheets frequently. Consider using antihistamines as described below.

Medications:

All nasal sprays should be directed toward the eye on the same side as the nostril being sprayed, so the medicine will coat the inflamed mucous membranes. Spraying the medicine toward the middle of the nose is less effective and can cause nosebleeds. The nasal sprays do not provide instant relief, so they must be used every day as scheduled during the seasons that the nasal symptoms are present.

Antihistamines can be used as needed when symptoms flare up. During the daytime use a non-sedating antihistamine such as Claritin®, Clarinex®, Zyrtec®, etc. Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®) is effective, too, but can cause sleepiness or hyperactivity. Decongestants can be used as needed also.

For Questions or Emergency Care:

Call the office at **601-984-5160**. You may need to speak with the doctor on-call.