

Allergic Rhinitis

Seasonal allergies are also known as allergic rhinitis or hay fever, and are caused when the immune system overreacts to irritants in the environment. A major trigger for spring allergies is tree pollen released into the air.

The most common symptoms include a stuffy or runny nose with clear drainage, sneezing, itchy eyes and nose, sore throat, throat clearing and a cough that may be worse at night and in the morning.

The best treatment for allergic rhinitis is to avoid allergy triggers by keeping windows closed in the car and at home to avoid exposure to pollens and limit outdoor activities when pollen counts are highest (early morning for tree pollen in the spring, afternoon and early evening for grasses in the summer).

There are over-the-counter and prescription drugs available to treat allergies. The medications include nasal steroids, antihistamines, and decongestants. Antihistamines can be very helpful for itchy eyes and runny nose, but they may not relieve nasal congestion.