WHAT ARE ALLERGIES?

Allergies are the result of an over-reactive immune system. When allergies occur, the immune system mistakenly identifies an allergen (pollen, pet dander, mold, and dust mites) as an “invader.” As a result, the body mounts an inappropriate immune response—similar to the one that it would launch against something much more harmful, such as the cold virus.

To rid itself of the “invader,” the immune system triggers a response that results in you experiencing symptoms—such as sneezing, runny nose, and itchy, watery eyes.

WHAT CAUSES ALLERGIES?

People are affected by all kinds of allergens. The most common ones include:

- Pollen
- Dust mites
- Pet dander
- Mold

Around the world, allergies are getting worse! 50 million people in the United States have nasal allergies, and changes in these allergies can be attributed to many different factors in our modern world, including urban air pollution, climate change, indoor environments, and increased exposure to antibiotics.
**HOW DO I KNOW IF IT'S A COLD, FLU, OR ALLERGIES?**

Which symptoms are typical of each condition?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Cold</th>
<th>Flu</th>
<th>Allergies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Not typical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of symptoms</td>
<td>A few days to 1 week. Rarely more than 10 days</td>
<td>A few days to 1 week. Rarely more than 10 days</td>
<td>Often longer than 3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucus</td>
<td>Thick, colored mucus</td>
<td>Thick, colored mucus</td>
<td>Clear, thin mucus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sneezing</td>
<td>Less prominent, with longer rest time in between</td>
<td>Less prominent, with longer rest time in between</td>
<td>More prominent, with sneezes in rapid succession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itchy eyes</td>
<td>Uncommon</td>
<td>Uncommon</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowing your symptoms and what they mean can help you and your doctor determine if it's a cold, the flu, or allergies.

**WHAT ELSE CAN I DO TO BE PREPARED FOR ALLERGY SEASON?**

- Put doormats inside and outside every door of your home
- When cleaning, work from top to bottom to trap dust mites
- Dust before you vacuum
- Wash bedclothes in hot water (at least 120°F)

**KEEP COOL** Using an air conditioner in your car can cut exposure to pollen by up to 30%, simply because it filters the air.

**SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY** Sleeping with your pet can be a source of prolonged exposure to common allergens like pollen and dust mites, as well as pet dander. And if your pet frequently goes outside, it can track outdoor allergens into your home and into your bed.

**IT'S RAINING...ALLERGIES?**

Blame it on the weather: sometimes all it takes is a storm to trigger your symptoms. During a thunderstorm, mold spores, grass, and pollen get broken up. Inhaling them can trigger allergy symptoms.

Visit Flonase.com for more information.