



SPRING NEWSLETTER

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ALLERGY SEASON SOLUTIONS

Are allergies bothering you this spring?

Allergies are among the most common chronic conditions worldwide with a wide range of symptoms. According to allergy experts, allergies are caused by the immune system. One of the immune system's main functions is to monitor the substances that enter our body and target potentially harmful substances like viruses or bacteria. Sometimes the immune system targets a substance that is not necessarily harmful to the body, like a type of pollen or maybe a certain food, and that targeted substance becomes an 'allergen'. The next time the immune system encounters the allergen, the body reacts by releasing histamines and other chemicals causing a wide range of allergic responses.

Allergic Rhinitis, also known as Hay Fever or Seasonal Allergies, is thought to be caused mainly by pollen. Those affected by this type of allergy experience symptoms in their nose, throat, eyes, ears, skin and roof of the mouth. People who are affected by this type of allergy usually experience symptoms when pollen is actively moving through the air, most often when pollen producing plants start the pollination process. Allergic Rhinitis can also be caused by indoor irritants such as mold, pet dander or other dust-like particles; which can cause symptoms year round. Additionally, inhaled irritants like smoke, strong scents or changes to air temperature/humidity can also cause the nasal mucosal lining to become irritated causing allergic rhinitis symptoms.

Did you know that patients who suffer from Allergic Rhinitis are more likely to suffer from Chronic Sinusitis? Our sinuses are air-filled cavities that are within your cheekbones, around your eyes and behind the nose. These cavities are lined with mucus, which help warm and moisten the air you breathe in. When something is blocking the sinus cavity from draining this mucus, overgrowth and possibly infection can occur. Sinusitis causes symptoms of facial pressure, pain, congestion, thick mucus drainage and/or cough. Sinusitis can either be Acute, which resolves in about 10 days with proper treatment, or Chronic, which is sinusitis that has lasted longer than 12 weeks with the proper treatment.

Treatment recommendations

Proper nasal hygiene is the first step in managing your allergies. Nasal hygiene is the practice of keeping your nasal passages clear, clear and moisturized to enhance the functions of the nose. This reduces congestion and can reduce the frequency/severity of sinus infections. Nasal hygiene is essential in managing allergies, chronic rhinitis and sinusitis. A good nasal hygiene routine includes: daily saline sinus rinses, the use of saline nasal spray and/or saline nasal gel as needed for dryness, the use of a bedside humidifier and/or an air purifier when sleeping.

For your saline sinus rinses we recommend the NeilMed Sinus Rinse Bottle, Netipot or Navage with an isotonic saline solution. It is very important when doing these rinses to use either bottled, purified or distilled water. If you do not have access to any of those, you can use tap water but you **MUST** boil the water for at least 10 minutes and allow it to cool back down to room temperature before use. Using tap/fridge water without boiling first can significantly increase your risk of contracting a fatal amoebic encephalitis.

In addition to proper nasal hygiene, we also recommend managing your allergy and rhinitis symptoms with intranasal steroid sprays like Nasocort, antihistamine nasal sprays like Astepro, or oral antihistamines like Zyrtec.

Still suffering after treatment?

If you are still suffering from allergy symptoms after using our treatment recommendations, or if you suspect you may have Sinusitis, please make an appointment with us so we can expand your treatment options. You can call our office at 303-795-5587 to schedule at your convenience.

References:

<https://www.aaaai.org/conditions-treatments/allergies/allergies-overview>

<https://www.aaaai.org/conditions-treatments/allergies/hay-fever-rhinitis>

<https://www.aaaai.org/conditions-treatments/allergies/sinusitis>

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