

Mayo Clinic Minute: Tips to deal with spring pollen and allergies

If you are one of the millions of people who suffer from allergies, you don't need a calendar to tell you it's spring. Sometimes called hay fever, allergic rhinitis can sometimes be confused with a cold. So, what's happening and what can you do?

While hay fever alone may not be life threatening, it can be uncomfortable, says [Dr. Arveen Bhasin](#), a Mayo Clinic allergy and immunology expert. She offers these tips for relief from spring pollen and allergies and tells you when it's time to see an allergist.

| Video | Audio |
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| Arveen Bhasin, M.D. Allergy and Immunology Mayo Clinic | "If you're prone towards allergies, you develop an antibody called IGE to that particular allergen. When you're exposed to that allergen, it causes the release of histamine and these other mediators." |
| | And that is when spring's unfurling can feel downright bad. |
| | Dr. Arveen Bhasin says the first step is to control your exposures. For instance, ... |
| | "... keep the windows at home, in the car, at work closed. If it's a dry and windy day, the pollen is blowing. You want to run the air conditioning because, that way, you're recirculating the clean air." |
| | For regular allergy sufferers, start your medication a couple weeks before the season starts. |
| | "First line treatment is what we call oral antihistamines that help with some of the itching, running, sneezing. And the nasal spray is really helping to focus on some of the congestion and the runny nose." |
| | Saline solutions using distilled water are also helpful. And if these tips don't help? |
| | "The best time to engage an allergist is really when you've tried all the environmental control measures that you can, and you've tried over-the-counter medications, but you're still symptomatic." |
| | For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Joel Streed. |

