

Four tips to help prevent fall allergy symptoms

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You've just gotten your summer routine dialed in, and you have to think about how to keep fall allergies at bay? Yes. But the good news is if you start planning now, your allergy symptoms will likely be much less severe, and you'll be able to enjoy the beauty the fall season brings.

"Fall can arrive with bad allergy symptoms," says allergist Bradley Chipps, MD, president of the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. "Many people don't realize if they spend time preparing now, they won't get hit as hard with sneezing, runny noses and itchy eyes when fall allergies descend with full force. It's a matter of planning ahead for what you know is coming based on your past experiences."

Here are four tips to help you keep fall allergy symptoms from ruining hayrides and your enjoyment of the changing leaves:

1. **Fall? Warm temps make us think it's still summer** – The coming of fall doesn't automatically mean cool weather. Unseasonably warm weather for longer periods of time is no longer a rare occurrence. Mild temperatures along with rain can promote plant and pollen growth, while wind accompanying rainfall can stir pollen and mold into the air, heightening symptoms for fall allergy sufferers. Because fall allergies may start earlier and last longer, it's important to begin taking your allergy medications at least two weeks before your symptoms normally start. And don't stop your medications until pollen counts have been down for about two weeks – usually after the first frost.
2. **Beautiful leaves + mold = misery** – Those fall leaves may

be gorgeous, but once they've fallen they begin to gather mold. And mold is an allergen that thrives in fall. In addition to leaves, mold can be found anywhere there is water – including in your backyard, in a field of uncut grass and in clogged gutters. If you are allergic to mold, the key to reducing it is moisture control. Be sure to clean standing water anywhere you find it. You can also help ward off mold by cleaning gutters regularly and keeping home humidity below 60 percent.

3. **Back to school, back to allergies?** – If your child suddenly seems to have a constant runny nose, itchy eyes, a cough and sneezing, they could be dealing with allergens in their classroom. Kids can be allergic to dust in the classroom, or there might be pollen coming in through open windows. And don't forget about mold – often found in bathrooms and locker rooms – as well as dander from pets that other kids may bring in on clothing and backpacks. If your child seems to have symptoms that came on around the time school started, make an appointment with an allergist. An allergist can set your child on the right track, for the long term, to handle their allergies or asthma.
4. **Dodging pollen means dodging symptoms** – Whether it's ragweed, which is fall's most prominent pollen, or another type, keeping pollen out of your life means fewer allergy symptoms. Some simple "housekeeping" tips can help. When you come in from outside, make sure pollen doesn't come with you. Leave your shoes at the door and throw clothes in the washing machine. Shower and wash hair in the evening before bed so you're not sleeping with pollen and getting it on your pillow and in your nose. Keep windows closed and run the A/C in both your home and your car. Monitor pollen and mold counts online so you can determine when it's best to stay inside.

If allergy symptoms are getting in the way of doing the things you want to do, see an allergist. An allergist can help treat your symptoms and help you get your life on track. Use ACAAI's allergist locator to find an allergist in your area.

Source:

<https://acaai.org/news/get-ready-fall-allergies-because-theyre-headed-your-way>