

If you have allergies, you know how negatively they can impact your quality of life. If you have seasonal allergies, they can make life a misery and slow you down from getting on with your regular activities, seemingly powerless to combat nature. But what are seasonal allergies? And what can you do to get relief from your symptoms?

**What Are Seasonal Allergies?**

Seasonal allergies develop when the body’s immune system becomes sensitive to and then overreacts to something in the environment. These triggers will not typically cause any problem in most people, but sets off a violent reaction in a person with the allergy. Around 36 million Americans have seasonal allergies.

Seasonal allergies relate to triggers that appear at various times during the year, such as hay fever in the spring. You can have seasonal allergies all year round, but there are certain times of year when certain triggers arrive.

If you cough and sneeze a lot at certain times of year, and/or your nose and eyes itch and are runny, it may not be a cold or the flu causing your misery, but rather seasonal allergies.

**Common Allergy Symptoms to Look Out For**

There are a number of allergy symptoms to look out for, not all of them typical:

* Congestion
* Post-nasal drip
* Excess mucus production
* Sneezing
* Runny nose
* Itchy, watery eyes
* Scratchy throat
* Tickle/irritation in the ears
* Decreased concentration and focus
* Decreased decision-making abilities
* Exhaustion and sleep disorders
* Mood swings
* Irritability
* Low blood pressure
* Asthma
* Hives
* Eczema
* Middle ear infections
* Swollen glands in the neck

**What Are the Most Common Seasonal Allergens?**

Mold, flower, tree, grass, weed pollen and ragweed are the most common triggers of seasonal allergies.

**When Is Allergy Season in the Northern Hemisphere?**

Allergy season typically starts in late February and lasts until early summer, then picks again in the autumn.

Flowers begin to bud in the earlier months of the year, such as late February. Tree pollen also starts early in the spring, and can leave your car covered with fluffy green tufts if you park under a pollinating tree.

Grass can also trigger allergies in late spring and early summer. Weeds thrive throughout the spring and early summer. Spring can be a truly miserable time for people with allergies.

If the winter has been a wet one, and/or the spring is a very rainy one, mold can go mad and grow rapidly. In this case, mold allergies can last right through until the fall.

In the autumn, ragweed is on the rise. It’s a weed that grows in the US from the East Coast to the Midwest. It blooms from August to November, with peak activity in September each year, just at the time everyone has to head back to work or school after the summer vacation.

**Ragweed Is Not the Only Autumn Allergen**

There are several other plants in North America that can trigger fall allergies. They include:

* Burning bush
* Cocklebur
* Lamb’s quarters
* Mugwort
* Pigweed
* Sagebrush
* Russian thistle
* Tumbleweed

Living in rural areas increases your risk of seasonal allergies.

Now that we've covered what seasonal allergies are, the main symptoms, and the most common causes, let’s look at some of the ways to relieve them - starting with the spring and summer allergies and moving on to the autumn ones.

**34 Ways to Help Combat Spring and Summer Allergies**

Fresh cut grass, blooming trees and flowers, and weeds all release pollen, causing seasonal allergies in millions of people every year. The medical term for hay fever and seasonal allergies is allergic rhinitis.

Allergic rhinitis can strike anyone, at any age. Some children have it and then outgrow it. Others might experience ever-worsening symptoms as they get older. Some people might get it for the first time as adults.

Others might move to a different part of the country or the world, and suddenly start experiencing seasonal allergies. Likewise, some people might move in the hopes that their allergies will go away. (This is not usually likely, however, because allergens are everywhere, and can also travel far.)

For example, Arizona used to be a popular place for allergy and asthma sufferers to move to. However, many people moving there in the last 40 years or so has meant them introducing plants that can trigger allergies.

Every plant releases pollen, but people only usually react to one or two plants. As mentioned, mold is a common allergy as well, and can affect people both outdoors and in their own homes. Mold season lasts for all but the coldest months of the year, so anything sufferers can do to avoid mold and keep down mold in their homes can help offer relief.

**The Dangers of Allergies**

There are a number of dangers related to allergies. Left untreated, seasonal allergy symptoms can drag people down and even spur asthma attacks. Approximately 80% of those with asthma also suffer from seasonal allergies. Treating hay fever symptoms promptly can reduce asthma–related emergencies and trips to the hospital.

Allergy-induced asthma attacks, also referred to as allergic asthma, typically present as wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness, difficulty breathing, and sometimes blueness around the lips. If you or someone in your family is not getting help from their inhaler, this should be treated as a medical emergency.

**Other Respiratory Issues**

People with compromised immune systems, such as HIV/AIDS or those who have had a transplant, often have lung issues that can be worsened by season allergies such as hay fever. Those who suffer from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other respiratory conditions need to manage their seasonal allergy symptoms to prevent further complications.

**A Challenge Every Season**

Someone suffering from seasonal allergies faces the same challenges season after season and year after year. Some years will be worse than others depending on weather conditions in the winter and then spring and summer.

In damp conditions, mold will proliferate. In windy conditions, pollen of all kind will blow far and wide, including in your windows, doors and cars. There’s really no escape.

But you can do your best to fight allergies on a number of fronts. Here are several suggestions on how to deal with your hay fever, tree pollen and grass allergies.

**1. Be aware of your risks**

Certain underlying medical conditions make it more likely you will have seasonal allergies. These include:

* Asthma
* Severe stress
* A deviated septum (an issue with the structure of your nose)
* COPD
* Nasal polyps (small lumps and bumps inside your nose)
* A recent injury, especially to the nose
* Pregnancy
* Food allergies
* After surgery
* A lack of sleep, weakening your immune system

These conditions, and others, can adversely affect your immune system and stop it from functioning properly.

Allergy symptoms are caused when our bodies release histamine in response to an allergen. A strong, healthy immune system can be the key to fighting seasonal allergies.

**2. Reduce stress**

Stress can worsen physical health as well as mental health. Stress causes inflammation in the body, which can make allergy symptoms even more severe. Stress management and stress relief techniques can help you relieve your symptoms naturally. Try meditation, biofeedback, and relaxation techniques.

**3. Adopt an anti-inflammatory diet**

If you’ve ever hit your thumb with a hammer, you will be familiar with the effects of inflammation. Now imagine that kind of inflammation throughout your entire body. Stress produces inflammation too. Inflammation is what also produces many of your common allergy symptoms. Eating an anti-inflammatory diet by avoiding things that trigger inflammation, and eating things that reduce inflammation, is an easy option.

There is a wide range of tasty foods you can add to your diet. These include:

* Blueberries
* Oats
* Green tea
* Ginger
* Turmeric
* Wild-caught salmon
* Raw honey

You can find other suggestions at:

<http://www.eatthis.com/anti-inflammatory-foods/>

Likewise, there is a range of food that can trigger inflammation:

* Sugar
* Unrefined carbs like white flour, white pasta
* Fried foods
* Dairy products
* Vegetable oil
* Artificial sweeteners
* Preservatives
* Red meat

You can find other suggestions for foods to avoid at:

http://www.eatthis.com/foods-that-cause-inflammation/

**4. Avoid foods that are common allergens**

During the months you suffer from allergies, consider avoiding foods that are common allergens, including:

* Dairy
* Ground nuts like peanuts
* Tree nuts like walnuts and pecans
* Soy
* Gluten, from wheat and rye
* Eggs
* Fish
* Shellfish

Caffeine and alcohol could also worsen symptoms. In addition, they don’t mix well with many of the most common over-the-counter and prescription medicines that are used to treat seasonal allergies.

**5. Add raw wildflower honey to your diet**

As we just mentioned, raw honey is good for reducing inflammation. It can also be used as what is termed homeopathy, using a small amount of a particular substance that causes health issues to treat the issue.

In the case of raw honey, try to buy it from a local farmer’s market or beekeeper who lives within a 10- to 20-mile radius of where you live. Those bees will have been gathering pollen from your local flowers and this can help reduce your allergic reaction to it.

Take a teaspoon each morning to help relieve sneezing, watery eyes and congestion.

**6. Beware of pregnancy-related asthma**

Each year, pregnant women who have never had allergies or asthma before suddenly develop the condition. Experts think it might be in relation to a woman’s immune system already being challenged. If you are pregnant and feel abnormally short of breath or notice a pregnant woman wheezing, it could be allergies and/or allergic asthma. The symptoms will usually disappear once the baby is born.

**7. Consider medications**

Antihistamines, corticosteroids and decongestants, as well as other over-the-counter allergy medications, counteract the effect of the histamines produced by the body and stop more from being produced. However, all of them do carry a risk of side effects, some of which are so severe that they can make you "sleepwalk" through your day and might even compromise your ability to function normally.

The most common side effects to watch out for include:

* Drowsiness
* Dry eyes
* Dry mouth
* Stomach upsets
* Heart palpitations
* Disturbed sleep patterns
* Stomach upsets
* Trouble urinating (usually in older men with prostate issues)
* Impaired performance, such as when driving a car

Note that there are quite a few over-the-counter and prescription medications to choose from, so if the side effects are worse than the allergies, consider trying another option. Remember that there is no cure for seasonal allergies, just treatments for the most common symptoms.

Always read the label. Many of the products are not suitable for people with various underlying health issues, such as:

* Pregnant women
* Breastfeeding women
* High blood pressure
* Heart disease
* Kidney disease
* Liver disease
* Glaucoma
* Thyroid issues

When in doubt, discuss with your doctor anything you are considering using to ensure it is safe.

**Allergy Medications**

There are a number of allergy medications that can be used alone, or in combination, to relieve a range of allergy symptoms. Many are available over the counter, while some require a prescription. They should be used under a doctor’s supervision.

* Antihistamines - These medications are commonly used to treat allergies such as allergic rhinitis or sometimes hives and other extreme allergic reactions.
* Nasal sprays - Sprays can be used to treat allergic rhinitis and/or non-allergic rhinitis.
* Eye drops - Eye drops soothe, cool and protect against irritants.
* Allergic emergency medications - These are medications used to treat anaphylaxis and anaphylactic shock if allergy symptoms get severe enough to produce symptoms like:
  + Hives
  + Feeling too warm
  + Looking flushed
  + Trouble swallowing
  + Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
  + Abdominal pain
  + A weak and rapid pulse
  + Swollen tongue or lips
  + Wheezing or difficulty breathing
  + Tingling hands, feet, mouth, or scalp
* Oral corticosteroids: These medications are sometimes used to treat severe allergies and can also be used as a rescue medication for asthma. Nasal corticosteroids are often used to deal with sneezing and congestion.
* Montelukast - This medication is used for relief of allergic rhinitis symptoms and asthma. It blocks leukotrienes, which can often cause allergy symptoms. It requires a prescription.

**8. Consider eye drops**

Red, watery, itchy eyes can be a misery, and made worse if you just can’t help yourself and rub them. Rubbing your eyes can introduce foreign bodies and germs into your eyes, making your symptoms even worse. Some eye drops are formulated for allergies, such as Visine-A. Patanol can also soothe allergy-stricken eyes and is available by prescription.

**9. Add spice to your foods**

If you are experiencing chest congestion, try adding aromatic or spicy foods to your diet to help purge mucus and enable you expel it. The best options include:

* Garlic
* Onions
* Ginger
* Red peppers
* Cayenne pepper
* Cinnamon

**10. Drink more hot liquids**

Soup and/or bone broth can also help relieve nasal and chest congestion. They also help keep you hydrated and purge toxins.

**11. Add probiotics to your diet**

Probiotics support a stronger immune system. They improve digestion, increase energy levels, and help you combat inflammation. Your best options are:

* Yogurt with active cultures, like Activia
* Fermented foods like sauerkraut or kimchi (Korean pickled vegetables)
* Pickled horseradish

**12. Eat more pineapple in spring and summer**

Pineapple contains a helpful enzyme called bromelain. It also contains high levels of vitamins B and C, which are essential for health and the immune system. Eating the core will provide the highest concentration of helpful nutrients.

Note: Do not eat pineapple during ragweed season in the fall, as the bromelain can actually worsen symptoms.

**13. Eat more kiwi fruit**

The humble kiwi has about three times more vitamin C than an orange. Peel and eat, or add to a green smoothie.

**14. Add acidic foods to your diet**

Apple cider vinegar helps to boost the immune system. It also breaks up mucus and supports drainage of the lymph glands.

Lemon juice contains vitamin C to boost the immune system and relieve congestion.

Create a tonic of one tablespoon of apple cider vinegar, one of fresh lemon juice, one tablespoon of freshly-grated ginger, and a half-tablespoon of local raw honey. Take up to three times a day to relieve symptoms.

**15. Eat a rainbow of organic vegetables**

Eating a variety of differently-colored vegetables offers a range of phytonutrients (plant nutrients) that strengthen your immune system. Healthy choices include:

* Beets
* Broccoli
* Carrots
* Cabbage
* Swiss chard
* Sweet potatoes/yams

**16. Add omega-3s to your diet**

Omega-3s are heart-healthy, but also help soothe inflammation. Add salmon, tuna and mackerel to your diet as you cut back on red meat. You can also increase your omega-3 levels with flaxseeds and walnuts (if you are not allergic to these, of course), which both work well as crunchy and tasty additions to salad.

**17. Try herbal teas**

Nettle tea is often used to help relieve congestion and various upper respiratory issues.

Licorice tea soothes the throat and opens airways.

Look for organic teas in your health food store and buy high-quality ones produced in the US, Canada, UK or European Union.

There is also a range of respiratory formulas, allergy and detox teas. Buy from reputable companies like Yogi Tea or Heath and Heather.

**18. Understand your allergic reactions**

While the timing and severity of an allergy season vary across the country, the following atmospheric factors can also influence how bad your hay fever symptoms might be:

* Tree and grass pollens thrive during cool nights and warm days.
* Pollen levels tend to peak in the morning hours and taper off significantly by the evening.
* Rain washes pollen away; however, pollen counts can soar after rain, especially if the temperature rises.
* Wind can carry pollen hundreds of miles.

**19. Investigate your allergies**

You may have had allergies all your life and have come to accept them as an annual misery. However, many people have more than one kind of allergy. For example, up to 75% of American people have a ragweed allergy. Some people also have food allergies.

An allergist can help you pinpoint symptoms and explore options you might never have considered before. It might be possible to eliminate certain allergies through testing.

**20. Practice good timing**

If you have a history of prior seasonal problems, and take various remedies for your symptoms, allergists recommend starting your medications about two weeks before you can expect them to begin, such as February to help deal with hay fever.

**21. Consider allergy shots**

Allergy shots involve injecting small amounts of the allergens that trigger your symptoms. Over time, this will change your immune system so that you will no longer get an allergic reaction. However, the process is slow, and can take three to five years.

Sublingual allergy treatments are similar to shots, except that the allergens are placed under the tongue instead of injected, making this an easier treatment - especially for patients who are not fond of needles.

**22. Be vigilant about grass allergies**

There are a number of grasses that can trigger allergies in the late spring and early summer. They include:

* Bermuda
* Johnson
* Kentucky
* Orchard
* Redtop
* Rye
* Sweet vernal
* Timothy

Keep your lawn short — tall feathery grasses will scatter pollen far and wide, especially on dry, windy days.

If you are sure your allergies are triggered by your lawn, you might wish to re-landscape your property. It’s a drastic solution, of course, but one that may be advisable depending on the severity of your symptoms and those of your family, if any. Irish moss is a good substitute, or herbs.

Avoid foods known to trigger itching at this time of year, including melons, peaches and tomatoes.

**23. Watch out for tree pollen**

Tree pollen is quite difficult to avoid because it is very fine and powdery, and can easily be carried on the wind for hundreds of miles during dry days. Even small amounts can trigger allergy symptoms.

Trees that often trigger allergies include:

* Ash
* Aspen
* Beech
* Birch
* Box elder
* Cedar
* Cottonwood
* Elm
* Hickory
* Mountain elder
* Mulberry
* Oak
* Pecan
* Willow

Large, flowering trees are actually not that much of a risk because the pollen is stickier and does not disperse as far.

The number of trees on your property or in your neighborhood can make a big difference. You obviously would not chop them down, but keeping them well pruned can help.

Avoiding specific foods can help relieve your symptoms. For example, if you're allergic to birch trees, foods to avoid include:

* Almonds
* Apples
* Carrots
* Celery
* Cherries
* Coriander
* Fennel
* Hazelnuts
* Kiwi fruit
* Peaches
* Pears
* Plums

**24. Don’t dry clothing and bed linen outdoors**

They will accumulate all sorts of pollen. Use the dryer instead.

**25. Keep windows closed, especially at night**

**26. Don’t sleep with your pets**

In addition to fur or pet dander often triggering allergies, pets will also bring pollen home with them on their fur and underbellies. Give them their own bed and wash it often.

**27. Use natural cleaning products**

Try diluting lemon, tea tree or eucalyptus oil with water for a safe and effective cleaner throughout the house. Use diluted bleach on bleach-proof surfaces. Vinegar and baking soda is another easy homemade cleaning recipe.

**28. Watch your personal care products**

Experts estimate that women are exposed to an average of 60 to 100 chemicals per day, and men to around 40 to 60, mostly through their personal care products. A lot of the chemicals are perfumes, which are not needed and can certainly worsen allergies. They are in body wash, soap, shampoo, deodorant, laundry detergent, and more.

Use mild baby products such as pure Castile soap and laundry detergent. Avoid perfumes, scented household cleaners, air fresheners, and other heavily-scented items. Consider learning how to make your own personal care products in small, fresh batches.

**29. Keep blinds and curtains clean**

Any allergens that sneak in the windows are going to accumulate on your blinds or curtains. Consider getting vertical blinds so the particles do not accumulate on the slats. Wash the curtains often, or give them up completely in favor of a more modern look.

**30. Buy new pillows regularly**

Pillows will gradually start to accumulate mold, mildew and dust mites. Avoid feather pillows, which can trigger allergic reactions also.

**31. Change your pillow cases regularly**

This will prevent allergens from accumulating and worsening your symptoms.

**32. Avoid keeping plants in the house**

This will reduce potential allergens. Avoid dried flowers and silk flowers, which can trigger allergies and also gather dust.

**33. Keep down dust in the home**

Anyone with seasonal allergies would benefit from keeping dust down in the home to avoid more allergic reactions.

**34. Don’t smoke**

You’re exposed to enough allergens without exposing yourself to more than 400 chemicals each time you light up. Your family and friends will thank you as well for not subjecting them to second-hand smoke.

Let's look next at ways to relieve common autumn allergies.

**12 Strategies for Dealing with Autumn Allergies**

Dealing with autumn allergies is almost all about ragweed relief. Taming mold can also help you live symptom free. Ragweed loves cool nights and warm days. Mold grows quickly in heat and high humidity, peaking in the autumn.

There are a number of things you can do to deal with these allergies in order to reduce your symptoms.

**Know Your Allergy Triggers**

As mentioned, there are two main triggers in the fall: ragweed and other weed pollens, and mold.

Ragweed is a hardy plant that can produce billions of grains of pollen in a single season. Studies have shown that the pollen can be borne on the wind as far as 400 miles because they are so lightweight.

Mold is present all year round, but if the year has been damp, and as the cooler and wetter autumn days arrive, mold can proliferate everywhere - including hay and straw, and raked leaves.

In general, when there is more rain, there is more pollen and mold, so the weather each year will be a strong determining factor in just how bad the allergy season will be.

**Self-Help for Ragweed Allergy**

There are a number of common-sense things you can do to help relieve your allergy symptoms.

1. Stay away from the allergen. Avoid fields full of weeds, barns and haylofts. Skip the hayrides on the local farm.
2. Wear a protective mask and goggles when gardening or doing yard work like raking leaves. This will slow down pollen and mold spores from affecting you.
3. Haul your garden rubbish away. Don’t leave your weeds, tree pruning’s or raked leaves in the yard. Rake up everything, bag it and bring it to your local recycling center to get composted.
4. Use air conditioners with HEPA filters. HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filters help prevent pollen from coming into a room via the air conditioner. There will still be some warm days of Indian summer when pollen and mold spores will be going wild. Change the filters often to help keep your house allergen-free.
5. Check the pollen forecast when you are planning to be outdoors. Weather.com reports this information, so you can decide when might be the best time to go out and enjoy the fresh air without the misery of an allergy attack. You can also check at the National Allergy Bureau website, especially if you are planning to travel. http://www.aaaai.org/global/nab-pollen-counts
6. Vacation or live by the ocean. Pollen counts are a lot lower near the ocean as compared with wooded areas.
7. Wear sunglasses to stop allergens from blowing into your eyes
8. Wash your hair regularly, and especially if you have been outdoors. This will help keep allergens away and also prevent any that you might have picked up from going onto your pillowcase.
9. Wash your eyebrows and eyelashes gently with a mild soap. These are two other places where allergens can stick and accumulate.
10. Wash the pets. They can bring pollen and other allergens in on their fur, so wash them once a month, or more often if they spend a lot of time outdoors.
11. Cut back your garden. Be sure to weed regularly.
12. Be diligent about mold and mildew. Keep the kitchen, bathrooms, laundry rooms, mud rooms and so on scrupulously clean. If your house tends to be damp, use special mildew-retardant paint.
13. Exercise in the morning or late in the day. If you go out for a walk or run, pollen counts will be typically lower at these points in the day. Note that pollen will always be at its worst on a hot, sunny day with lots of wind as compared with a cool, cloudy day without a lot of wind.
14. See an allergist. An allergist specializes in ways to treat a wide variety of allergies, including ragweed allergy. They can offer self-care suggestions, medications (both over the counter and prescription), and other tried-and-tested methods for taming your ragweed and mold allergies. These suggestions many include:
15. Nasal lavage (washing) using a neti pot or other tool to flush allergens out of your nasal passages and sinuses
16. Nasal sprays like Flonase and Nasonex, which contain corticosteroids
17. Oral antihistamines like Allegra and Claritin, or Zyrtec and Clarinex, which require a prescription.
18. Astelin is a nasal spray antihistamine that offers good relief of symptoms.
19. Histamines are released during an allergic reaction, so antihistamines prevent the release of histamines, easing your allergy symptoms
20. Over-the-counter and prescription eye drops can help itchy eyes. Brands to look out for include Visine-A and Patanol.
21. The doctor may suggest Singulair, also used to treat asthma. It works by blocking leukotrienes, substances which trigger allergy symptoms.
22. Decongestants can help with the runny and stuffy nose common with allergies. However, it is important to note that they may increase your blood pressure and heart rate. Those with certain medical issues should therefore not take decongestants, so be sure to ask your doctor if they are right for you.
23. Watch your diet. Certain foods can actually trigger your ragweed allergy symptoms. Foods to avoid include:
    * Bananas
    * Cucumbers
    * Melons
    * Pineapple
    * Sunflower seeds
    * Zucchini
    * Chamomile tea (and teas with chamomile in them, such as Sleepytime teas or anti-anxiety teas)

**12 Ways to Reduce Mold Allergies**

Mold can lurk everywhere, but it loves damp conditions. Avoid using a humidifier in your house and consider using a dehumidifier if you live in an old house or in a very cool and damp climate. Try to keep your humidity in your home between 35% and 60%.

1. Avoid places which are likely to contain mold including:

* Antique stores
* Barns and animal feed stores
* Construction sites and buildings under construction
* Farms
* Flower shops
* Greenhouses
* Garden nurseries

You may not like how you look wearing a mask when you go to these places, but it’s better than an asthma attack.

2. Use extractor fans in damp places. Extractor fans will remove excess moisture in the bathroom, such as after a shower, and remove cooking humidity and also odors.

3. Keep all surfaces clean. Avoid soap scum, chemical build-up from hard water, and grease in the kitchen, which can all allow mold spores to accumulate and trigger allergies. Use bleach and mold-specific cleaners.

4. Check your basement. Mold loves dark, dank places. Consider using a dehumidifier to keep things dry. Avoid carpeting or wood floors in the basement; instead, opt for linoleum, vinyl or concrete, which do not retain moisture. If you are using it as a finished basement, opt for leather furniture rather than cloth upholstery. If you are using it for storage, pack everything away in covered plastic containers, or in space bags you vacuum all the air out of so no dampness can get in.

5. Clean air conditioner and dryer vents. In this way, no lint or mold spores can accumulate.

6. Beware of swimming pools, hot tubs and changing rooms. These damp, humid places are the ideal breeding grounds for mold and mildew.

7. Keep your car windows shut in the rain and check seals. Even a few trickles of rain can soak your upholstery and/or work their way down into your car door. Make sure your window seals are in good condition to avoid drips, and try not to roll the windows down when they are soaking wet.

8. Get rid of carpeting more than 3 years old. The carpet and underlay tend to soak up moisture like a sponge, allowing mold to develop. Try wood-look vinyl flooring instead. It has all be benefits of hardwood but is moisture and spill-resistant.

9. Use a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter. If you do have carpeting on the floor, vacuum it regularly using one with a HEPA filter. Keep the filter clean and replace regularly.

10. Buy an air purifier. There are a number of options for air purifiers that are supposed to help clean allergens from the air, including mold spores. Visit https://www.consumerreports.org/cro/air-purifiers/buying-guide to learn more about the pros and cons and which model might be right for your home and budget.

11. Natural anti-fungals. Garlic is a great anti-fungal food that can help strengthen the immune system. Other suggestions for dealing with mold are oregano oil in food (use by the drop because it is so potent), and tea tree oil, which can be used externally in a diluted form to clean surfaces and skin.

12. Dietary considerations. If you are allergic to airborne mold spores, you may be allergic to certain fungi found in common foods. Avoid:

* Moldy cheeses such as blue cheese
* Mushrooms
* Vinegar and foods containing vinegar, such as salad dressing and pickles
* Sour cream, sour milk, and buttermilk
* Meat or fish
* Yeast
* Foods made with yeast, such as bread and beer
* Pickled fish, such as herring
* Smoked meats
* Dried fruits such as dates, prunes, figs, and raisins
* Soy sauce, fermented soy sauce
* Hot dogs, sausages
* Canned juices
* Refrigerated leftovers that are more than a couple of days old

If you are allergic to mold, you might experience tingling in the mouth or shortness of breath within an hour of eating any of the items on this list.

**Other Common Seasonal Allergy Triggers**

There are a number of other seasonal allergy triggers that only happen at certain times of year, but are nevertheless worth paying attention to. These include:

* Wood smoke, such as campfires in summer and fireplaces in winter
* Insect bites and stings, usually in spring and summer
* Chlorine in indoor and outdoor swimming pools and hot tubs
* Candy ingredients at Halloween and Christmas, including artificial coloring and flavoring
* Floral wreaths, spring and fall, such as at Thanksgiving
* Scented candles (all year, but especially at Christmas)
* Potpourri and aromatherapy essential oils (all year, but especially at Christmas)
* Pine wreathes and pine Christmas trees in the holidays

You may wish to keep a seasonal allergy diary in which you note all your triggers, what you are doing to relieve the symptoms, and what works best. You can also share your allergy diary with your doctor so they can offer suggestions as to what more you could be doing.

Seasonal allergies can be a complete misery that makes every day seem like a struggle. However, by knowing your triggers and the treatment options available, you can eliminate a lot of symptoms and make your life a lot more comfortable during allergy season.

To your best health!