



OVERCOMING SPRING ALLERGIES - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

These tips and simple steps from certified allergists can help you manage your Spring allergies.

[Printable Checklist Inside](#)

Prepare Ahead of Time for an Allergy-Free Spring Season



Symptoms of allergies can take over your life, as coughing, sneezing, itchy eyes, and congestion can impede your productivity at work, distract you from spending quality time with your loved ones, and hinder your daily routine.

If you experience sneezing, coughing, and other frustrating symptoms as the winter season turns to spring, you're in good company. According to the Allergy and Asthma Foundation of America (AAFA), around 20 million U.S. adults and 6.1 million U.S. children are affected by springtime allergies.

This guide offers actionable measures you can take to relieve symptoms of your spring allergies. We have included a printable list of allergy-control techniques that you can practice regularly - on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. To ensure that your entire family stays informed about these measures, it is recommended that you print the checklist and display it in a visible location.

About Carolina Asthma & Allergy

Carolina Asthma & Allergy Center has been operating in the Charlotte area since 1952 and is the largest asthma and allergy practice in the region, comprised solely of board-certified physicians. Our priority is to educate patients and their caregivers, enhance their quality of life, and uphold an exceptional level of proficiency and attention.

Our ultimate objective is to assist patients in overcoming the constraints of asthma and allergies by providing efficient diagnosis and treatment, allowing them to breathe comfortably, thrive, and conquer their allergy-related difficulties.



What Are Spring Allergies?



Allergies occur when your immune system reacts to a foreign substance it deems harmful by producing antibodies. These foreign substances are known as allergens.

Spring allergies, also known as hay fever or seasonal allergic rhinitis, are a common problem for many people and are typically caused by pollen from trees, grasses, and weeds. As these plants start to bloom and release their pollen into the air, people with allergies can experience symptoms such as sneezing, runny nose, itchy and watery eyes, and congestion.

These allergies can affect children and adults alike. Individuals can start to suffer from spring allergies at any age and develop more as they age, partly due to increased exposure to seasonal allergy triggers.

Spring allergens may include:



Multiple Types of Pollen

The peak of the pollen season for trees, grasses, and molds occurs during the springtime, while the period from May through July is the most problematic for white flower pollen.



Tree pollen

Trees pollinate throughout the spring. Cedar and birch trees lead the pack starting in February. Pollen from oak and pine trees is most common in the mid-spring in Charlotte. Other trees such as maple, cottonwood, and birch can also be problematic in March and April.



Grass pollen

As temperatures rise in the spring, grasses begin to grow and release pollen. This is a common trigger for allergies, particularly throughout the spring and early summer.

 **Mold**

During the spring, mold spores are released into the air and can be carried by the wind for long distances. When people with mold allergies inhale these spores, their immune systems can overreact and trigger symptoms such as sneezing, runny nose, itchy eyes, and coughing.

 **Weed pollen**

Weed pollen is one of the most common causes of seasonal allergies. In North Carolina, many weeds start to bloom and release pollen into the air during the spring. Some may experience an immune response that leads to the release of chemicals, such as histamine, which cause inflammation and allergy symptoms.

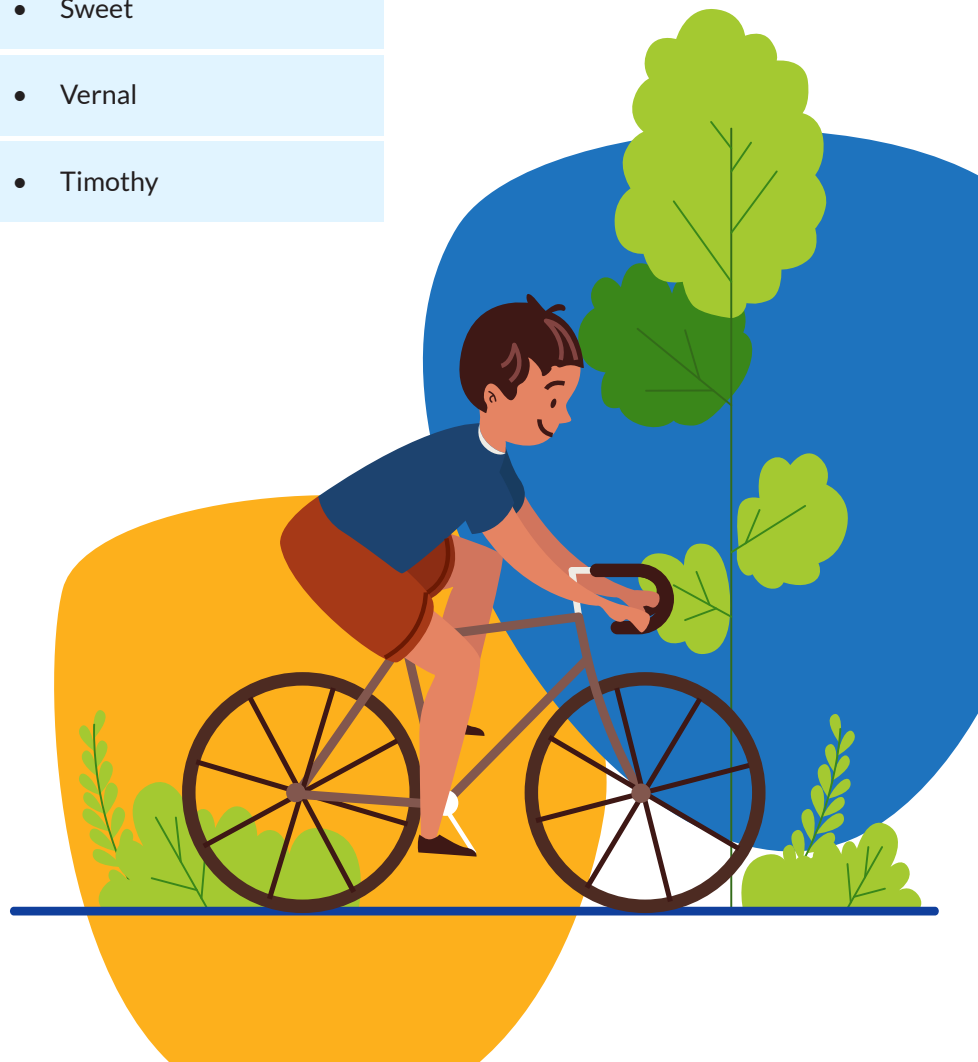


Plants Most Likely to Trigger an Allergic Reaction



If you often experience allergy symptoms during the spring season, you should avoid these varieties of trees and grasses or wear protective clothing around them:

Trees	Grasses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Orchard
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kentucky
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Birch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bermuda
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cedar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Johnson
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cottonwood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rye
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sweet
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hemlock	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vernal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hickory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timothy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maple	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mulberry	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oak	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pine	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sweetgum	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sycamore	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Walnut	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Willow	



Check Your Symptoms! Are You Suffering From Spring Allergies?



Spring allergy symptoms can last for several weeks, acting as a constant irritation to those suffering from them. Here are the most common symptoms to look out for:

- Sinus congestion (Stuffy nose)
- Runny nose
- Post-nasal drip
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Red, Itchy, and/or watery eyes
- Itching around the throat, nose, and mouth
- Swelling around the eyes
- Dark circles under the eyes

6 Tips to Conquer Spring Allergies

You and your family can take the following measures to help alleviate or avoid experiencing any allergy symptoms:

1. Know what you are allergic to.

Knowing what you're allergic to can help you take steps to avoid exposure to the allergens that trigger your symptoms. For example, if you're allergic to tree pollen, you may want to avoid spending time outdoors on days when the pollen count is high or wear a mask to reduce your exposure.

2. Start treatment with medication early.

Treat your allergy symptoms before they begin. If you know the spring season is a difficult time for your allergies, start taking daily allergy medicine ahead of time. Taking a daily antihistamine or nasal spray can reduce symptoms of seasonal allergies.

3. Monitor pollen levels.

It is important to get familiar with different pollen counts. You can watch different pollen levels by using the local pollen tracker. This tracker is located in our Southpark office and collects air samples daily from February to November. Stay informed!

4. Strategically schedule your outdoor activities.

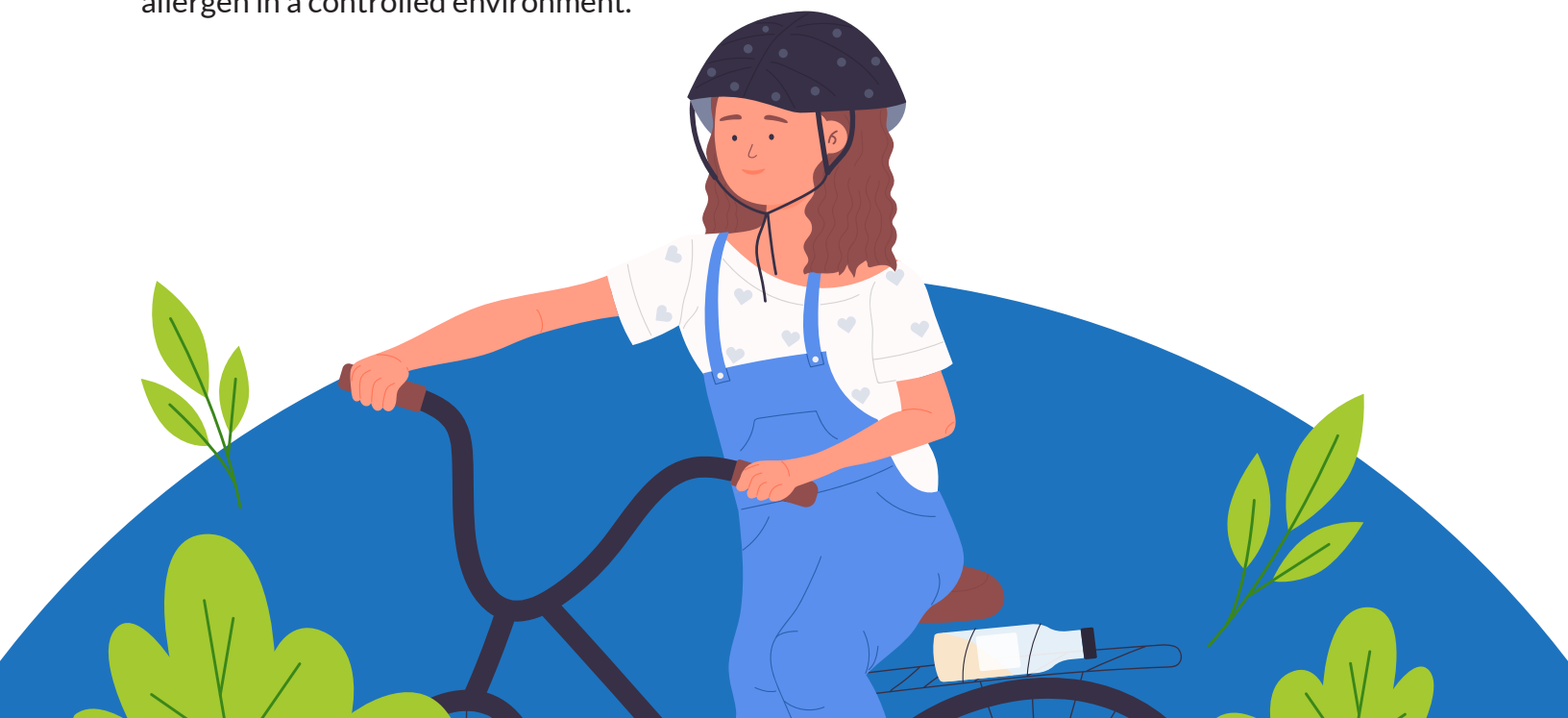
It is a good idea to keep the pollen count in mind when scheduling outdoor activities. Pollen levels in North Carolina typically peak in the early morning, between 5 to 10 AM. At this time, the temperature and humidity levels are still low, which allows pollen to travel further in the air. As the day progresses and the temperature rises, the pollen tends to settle closer to the ground, making it slightly safer for those with allergies to go outside.

5. Maintain a tidy living space and take a shower following any outdoor activities.

After being outside, remove shoes, wash hands, and shower to eliminate pollen from skin and hair. Pollen is adhesive, and tracking it inside can exacerbate allergy symptoms. Rinsing off post-outdoor activity is a simple yet effective method of protection for you and your household.

6. Get your yearly allergy shots.

Your allergy clinic will provide you with these injections, which contain a minute amount of the pollen or other substance that triggers your allergy symptoms. This treatment, called immunotherapy, aims to gradually expose your immune system to increasing doses of the allergen in a controlled environment.



Get Ahead of It by Seeing an Allergist

If you know you are a seasonal allergy sufferer or you start to feel any symptoms, consider seeking professional help to ensure that your allergy symptoms don't last longer than they have to.

It might be time to seek help from an allergy specialist if you:

- Experience frequent episodes of coughing, congestion, wheezing, or sneezing
- Have been diagnosed with more than one sinus infection in the last 6 months
- You are no longer able to control your symptoms using over-the-counter medications
- Your everyday activities are being affected by the symptoms of spring allergies

Carolina Asthma and Allergy Center can assist you in finding relief from your allergy symptoms by developing a personalized treatment plan with an allergist, leading to a significant improvement in your overall quality of life. To schedule an appointment, call 704-372-7900.



Our Spring Allergy Checklist

Here are some steps you can adopt to help you or your family avoid experiencing spring allergy symptoms.

Daily

- Check pollen counts
- Keep windows and doors closed to prevent pollen from entering your home
- Wear glasses, a hat, and a mask when dusting or going outside
- Shower frequently, washing your hair and face to rinse off any pollen
- Use a saline nasal spray to remove any pollen that may have entered your nose
- Leave shoes at the door
- Clean off your pets once they return indoors
- Use a dehumidifier set at between 35 and 50%
- Use the “recirculate” option in your car
- Use a HEPA filter in your HVAC system
- Wash clothing regularly
- Don't sleep with pets
- Take medication as directed

Weekly

- Dust surfaces with a damp cloth to avoid spreading allergens into the air
- Wash your bedding in hot water to remove any allergens
- Deep clean your carpets
- Vacuum your home with a vacuum cleaner that has a HEPA filter to remove allergens from carpets and other surfaces
- Clean your entryways
- Don't dry your clothes a clothesline

Monthly

- Replace the air filter in your HVAC system to ensure it is functioning properly and removing allergens from the air
- Clean or replace the filter in your air purifier, if applicable
- Consider having your home professionally cleaned to remove allergens from hard-to-reach areas
- Wash your mattress cover
- Maintain your lawn

Every Few Months

- Service and change your air filters
- Clean your air conditioning ductwork or HVAC vents

