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## **POLLEN ALLERGIES**

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (hay fever) affects more than 35 million Americans. If you suffer from it, you may experience sneezing, stuffiness, a runny nose and itchiness in your nose, the roof of your mouth, throat, eyes or ears. These allergic reactions are most commonly caused by pollen and mold spores in the air, which start a chain reaction in your immune system.



Pollen from plants with colorful flowers, like roses, usually does not cause allergies. These plants rely on insects to transport the pollen for fertilization. On the other hand, many plants have flowers which produce light, dry pollen that are easily spread by wind. These culprits cause allergy symptoms. Seasonal allergic rhinitis is often caused by tree pollen in the early spring. During the late spring and early summer, grasses often cause symptoms. Late summer and fall hay fever is caused by weeds.

### **Pollen Avoidance Tips**

- ▶ Try to stay indoors when the pollen levels are reported to be high. ([www.pollen.com](http://www.pollen.com)) especially during morning.
- ▶ Keep your windows closed and use air conditioners if possible to prevent pollen from circulating indoors.
- ▶ When traveling by car, keep your windows closed.
- ▶ Wear sunglasses or glasses to protect eyes from pollen exposure.
- ▶ Shower after working or playing outdoors to ensure pollen is removed from your body and place worn clothes (covered with pollen) in laundry basket.
- ▶ Don't mow lawns or rake leaves because it stirs up pollen and molds.
- ▶ Also avoid hanging sheets or clothes outside to dry.