



# VitaMin

Vital health information in a minute!

## Allergies

# Attack your allergies

### Seasonal allergies

Sneezing, wheezing, runny nose, watery eyes... sound familiar? Then you must be one of the 35 million Americans suffering from seasonal allergies. If pollen is your enemy, read on for tips about how to control your seasonal allergies.

#### Tips that are nothing to sneeze at

- Wash your bedding every week in hot water, as pollen and other allergy-causing substances can cling to fabrics.
- Limit the number of throw rugs in your house to reduce dust and mold, and wash the ones you do have.
- Keep your windows closed and change air conditioning unit filters and vents often.

#### Over-the-counter remedies

Start by taking an over-the-counter, non-drowsy antihistamine, like Claritin or Zyrtec.

- Use a saline nasal rinse nose spray to clear allergy-causing particles out of your sinuses.
- Try antihistamine eye drops to relieve itchy, watery eyes. Just don't use them for more than two or three days, or over time you'll need more and more to relieve the redness.

### Food Allergies

About 5% of children have allergic reactions to foods. In teens and adults, that number drops to 4%. However, for those who have food allergies – or even a food intolerance – it can be a serious and stressful issue.

### What are the most common food allergies?

Common adult food allergies:

- Peanuts
- Tree nuts such as walnuts
- Shellfish such as shrimp, crayfish, lobster and crab
- Milk
- Eggs

Common children food allergies:

- Eggs
- Milk
- Peanuts



While adult allergies usually stick around for life, children can sometimes outgrow theirs.

### Tolerating a food intolerance

A food intolerance is different from an allergy. An intolerance doesn't mean you're allergic to something – it just means you can't digest it properly. Here's information on two common food intolerances:

#### Lactose intolerance

- Occurs when the body can't easily digest lactose, a natural sugar found in milk and dairy products.
- Affects at least one out of 10 people.
- Can cause bloating, abdominal pain, gas, diarrhea and vomiting.

#### Gluten intolerance

- Caused by the body's bad response to gluten – a protein found in bread, pasta or wheat and other grains and crackers.
- Symptoms can include gas, bloating, diarrhea, weight loss, fatigue, weakness and vomiting, as well as anemia, osteoporosis and damage to the intestines.
- Commonly treated by avoiding any foods that contain gluten.

Source: [www.WebMD.com](http://www.WebMD.com); [www.womenshealth.gov/whw](http://www.womenshealth.gov/whw)