



## POLLENS

During the early months of spring, the trees and grasses begin their pollination. Tiny particles are released into the air and cause the first symptoms of hay fever. In the late fall, the dreaded ragweed and weed pollens cause many allergy sufferers to have their greatest increase in symptoms. Some pollens are visible while others are not. The most common allergenic pollens are those that are airborne, such as tree, grass, weed, and ragweed. Most flowers are pollinated by insects and are generally not offensive to the allergic individual although any pollen has the potential to cause symptoms upon exposure.

The most common symptoms of a pollen allergy are: itchy, swollen, red or watery eyes; clear, watery nasal mucus; or sneezing and nasal itching. These symptoms appear most often during outdoor activities and decrease when inside.

People who suffer from pollen allergies find the greatest relief in an air conditioned area. Pollen allergic individuals should avoid sleeping in a room with opened windows. The pollen count is the highest during the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 a.m., so special attention should be given to any outdoor activity during this time. If outdoor activity is unavoidable, a filtering mask should be worn. Allergic patients who are having symptom, increase, due to an outdoor exposure, will benefit from showering and changing into fresh clothing.

During pollen season, it is advisable to follow a diet that eliminates the concomitant foods from the diet. A concomitant food reacts with the allergen causing greater symptoms. During pollen season some foods that should be avoided are: grains, melons, bananas, and milk. The doctor may recommend that you avoid other foods also. Your diet should consist of fresh fruits and vegetables and fresh meats. Increasing your intake of vitamin C enriched foods will help to bolster your immune system.

### COMMON POLLEN SOURCES:

- **TREES:** (early spring) maple, oak, birch, mountain cedar, walnut, pine, hickory, elm, ash
- **GRASSES:** (spring-summer) Bermuda, june (Kentucky bluegrass), fescue, rye, orchard, timothy, Johnson, red top, sweet vernal
- **RAGWEED:** (Sept-first frost) common (short), western, giant, false



- **WEEDS:** (late summer-fall) English plantain, lambs quarters, dock, mugwort, Russian thistle, marsh elder

**NOTE:** This is a list of the more common allergens and is by no means comprehensive to your region.