

Summer allergies rampant
By Gina Kraman

Picnics, vacations, sandy beaches, runny noses, itchy eyes, and sneezing: they're all part of summer if you suffer from allergies.

"Summer allergies can cause severe symptoms for some sufferers, and can be just as bad as the spring and fall seasons. Some unusual symptoms, like dark under-eye circles, can leave you looking like you lost a round in a boxing ring," explains ScienceDaily.com. "Even if you've never before had allergies, they can suddenly strike at any age and time of the year."

Now in the summer, people allergic to grass and weed pollen are suffering. Hay fever (allergic rhinitis), strikes in the spring due largely from tree pollen. In contrast, fungus spores cause problems from March through November, according to WebMD. People who suffer year-round are likely allergic to indoor allergens including dust mites, animal dander, and mold.

Dr. Nirmala Arora, allergist and clinical immunologist, Woodridge Clinic, explains how inhaled allergens are especially problematic in summertime, with windy days spreading high levels of pollen (tiny microscopic grains released in the air from trees and plants). When allergy sufferers breathe in pollen or it reaches their eyes, it triggers their irritating symptoms. The higher the pollen count, the more severe the symptoms.

Other summertime allergy triggers include ragweed pollen, which can travel for hundreds of miles in the wind, plus air pollution.

"Summer air pollution can make allergy symptoms worse. One of the most common pollutants is ozone, which is created in the atmosphere by a combination of sunlight, nitrogen oxide, and hydrocarbons from burning fuel," explains WebMD.

Some sufferers mistakenly think their symptoms are from a cold, instead of an allergy. ScienceDaily says, "If your symptoms are persistent and last more than two weeks, you should see your allergist for proper testing, diagnosis, and treatment. Finding and treating the source of your suffering can clear up unwanted symptoms."

For more information, call Woodridge Clinic, (630) 910-1177, or visit www.woodridgeclinic.com. Woodridge Clinic has offices in Woodridge, Lemont, and Lombard.

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