

TO YOUR HEALTH

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Is it a Cold or Allergies?

By Susan Cusson, NP



Do you tend to get "colds" that develop suddenly and occur at the same time every year in the Spring and the Fall?

If so, it's possible that you actually have seasonal allergies, commonly known as "hay fever". While colds and seasonal allergies share some of the same symptoms, they are very different diseases.

Common colds are caused by viruses, while seasonal allergies are triggered by exposure to allergens. Both create immune system responses in very different ways. Treatment for these two illnesses is also very different.



The biggest triggers for spring and summer allergies are tree, grass, and ragweed pollen. When you inhale pollen, your immune system generates

antibodies that trigger mast cells to release chemicals such as histamine, leukotrienes, and prostaglandins. These eventually spread to different tissues such as the eyes, nose, throat, and lungs. When there is high exposure, the immune system goes into high gear and floods the body with these chemicals. This often results in itchy, watery eyes, runny nose, sneezing and coughing.



Seasonal allergies often develop in childhood or early adulthood. Older adults may see a resurgence of allergy symptoms thought to be long gone. You can also develop allergies in later years even if you never experienced any symptoms when you were younger. A change in environment can also bring on new allergies.

Treatment of seasonal allergies includes over-the-counter antihistamines, nasal steroid sprays and decongestants.



Most importantly, avoid exposure to allergens where possible. Keeping windows closed during the time of year when pollen is high can help reduce exposure. Changing your pillowcase more often can also help. Seasonal allergies may last several weeks to months if not treated.

Treatment of a common cold includes rest, pain relievers and over-the-counter cold remedies, such as decongestants or expectorants. A cold usually lasts seven to ten days, although some may last as long as two or three weeks. There's still no cure for the common cold and most people get better with conservative treatment as described above. It is advisable to seek medical advice if your cold is not improving as expected or if you develop worsening symptoms such as a fever over 100, shortness of breath or wheezing.

Differentiating between colds and allergies isn't always straightforward. The chart below can help guide you in the right direction. If in doubt, call your health care provider for advice.

<u>SYMPTOM</u>	<u>COLD</u>	<u>ALLERGY</u>
Cough	Usually	Sometimes
General achiness	Sometimes	Never
Fatigue and weakness	Sometimes	Sometimes
Itchy eyes	Rarely	Usually
Sneezing	Usually	Usually
Sore throat	Usually	Rarely
Runny nose	Usually	Usually
Stuffy nose	Usually	Usually
Fever	Sometimes (usually)	Never



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Wellness Fair

Learn about ways to reduce stress and keep your brain sharp. Sample some plant based beverages and healthy snacks. There will be sign up sheets for Fitness Evaluations as well as mini sessions of Reiki, Acupressure, Chiropractor and Massage.

Please join us on

Friday,
May
2019



31,

Health Education Lecture

“The Health Benefits of Yoga and Meditation”.

Helen Theodosiou, Yoga instructor at Carleton-Willard, will present a very informative lecture.

Please join us in the Auditorium to learn some simple ways to incorporate mindfulness into your life.

May 22, 2019

10:30am — 11:30am

Auditorium Center

