

## Spring has almost sprung?? Or at least I hope so!

With the glimmer of warmer weather on the horizon, so too is the thought of allergies for many people. Seasonal allergies can put a damper on enjoying the warmer fresh air. As small pollens and mold particles become released into the air, some people will experience runny noses and teary eyes along with other symptoms. Approximately 25% of Canadians suffer from seasonal allergies and that number is on the rise. There are many theories as to why this is happening. Some believe this is the result of over use of antibiotics. Others blame the increase on clean living, requiring our immune system to fight allergies instead of infection.

Allergies can start at any age. Common allergens in Southern Alberta are ragweed, grass, and tree pollens which occur early in spring. Snow mold released during early field processing in our area can be highly irritating as well. Pollens initially affect the nasal passage causing congestion, and then move further to your lungs and may cause asthma. Our bodies produce histamines to counteract the allergic reaction and this is where the allergy symptoms come from.



### Prevention:

Instead of locking yourself inside till next fall, there are treatments that can proactively be put into place to decrease allergy symptoms. Know the area and common allergens where you live. Avoid direct contact when you are able. Even though it will be tempting to leave them open, some may opt to close windows during the morning and use the air conditioner if needed. Furnace filters should also be cleaned out regularly. Use online sites and apps that posts allergy reports.

### Treatments:

Once prevention fails we move on to treatments. Many over the counter treatments for allergies are available. Antihistamines are used most frequently. Nasal sprays and nasal irrigation may relieve symptoms for some patients. Testing for specific allergens may be beneficial for some people to predict symptoms that may occur during certain seasons of the year. This might then continue to allergy injections for treatment.

I hope this helps decrease the drops from noses to drops of rain.

Be well,  
Vanessa

*Resources: Pelmorex Weather Networks Inc. (n.d.). Canada's 10 most common seasonal allergies. Retrieved March 14, 2018, from <https://www.theweathernetwork.com/news/articles/canadas-10-most-common-seasonal-allergies/81059>*

*Seasonal allergies. (n.d.). Retrieved March 14, 2018, from <http://opto.ca/>*