

# Pediatric Associates of NYC

## Seasonal Allergies

Allergies can make you feel like you have a cold, and symptoms can include a runny nose, nasal congestion, sneezing, red eyes, and an itchy nose, mouth, throat and/or eyes. Some children may also have a headache and/or fatigue. Fever is not a symptom of allergies.

Allergens/pollens change throughout allergy season:

- Early spring allergies- Tree pollens
- Late spring and summer allergies- Grass
- Late summer and fall allergies- Weeds/ragweed

Some common treatments:

- **Nasal Corticosteroids** (Flonase/Flonase Sensimist, Nasacort, Rhinocort are all OTC). Nasal steroids are the mainstay of treatment for allergies (nasal inflammation, nasal congestion, runny nose and sneezing). Nasal steroids should ideally be started 1-2 weeks before the anticipated pollen season for those with a history of seasonal allergies and taken daily for maximal effect.
- **Antihistamines** (Zyrtec, Xyzal, Allegra, Claritin or generic versions). These medications are taken by mouth and can relieve itchy watery eyes, a runny nose and sneezing, as well as itchy skin and hives.
- **Eye drops** (Zaditor, Pataday, Alaway)- for relief of itchy, red and watery eyes

Other suggestions for those with pollen allergies:

- Use A/C rather than leaving windows open
- Use a HEPA filter to reduce aerosolized particles of pollen, pet dander, tobacco smoke and dust mites. HEPA filters are not effective in removing allergens on surfaces of furniture, floors or walls.
- Shower or bathe daily when returning home to remove allergens from body surfaces and hair (and avoid getting into bed until after bathing)
- Change top layer of clothing upon returning from outside to prevent spreading pollens in the home
- Wear a cap (baseball cap or hat) to decrease pollens in hair and on face. Remove hat when indoors