

Protect your kids from pollen allergies: expert

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Tips for keeping allergens away from their skin, out of air in your home.

(HealthDay)—Many children suffer allergies at this time of year as trees and other plants start releasing pollens into the air. So parents need to monitor their youngsters for symptoms, an expert says.

"There are different types of allergies, but if you notice that your child has more symptoms and reactions during the spring it's a clue that they have a pollen allergy," Dr. Joyce Rabbat, a pediatric allergist at Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine, said in a Loyola news release.

Symptoms of pollen allergies—which are most likely to be worse on dry, windy days—include itchy eyes, sneezing, stuffy/runny nose, coughing and asthma.

"If your child's allergy symptoms are interfering with his or her daily life, there is no reason to let the child suffer. Allergy symptoms are very treatable. Some people think it's just something they need to 'live with' but that's not the case," Rabbat said.

She said parents can take the following steps to

help reduce children's allergy symptoms:

- Check [pollen counts](#) and limit children's time outside when the counts are high.
- Keep windows and doors closed, especially on high-count days. This will help limit the amount of pollen that lands on furniture and carpets. Turn on your air conditioner to filter pollen from the air within your house.
- Have children wash their face and hands when they come in from outdoors. A shower and change of clothes can take [pollen](#) off the body.

"If your child is active outdoors or in sports, make sure he or she takes allergy medication before heading outside," Rabbat said.

Parents also need to watch for [asthma symptoms](#) because many children with allergies also have allergic asthma. Symptoms of allergic asthma include coughing, shortness of breath, [rapid breathing](#), wheezing and a feeling of tightness in the chest.

"Often treating children's allergies helps to control their asthma as well. Kids may need to take an allergy medicine before going outside, or they may need daily [allergy](#) medication. It's also important to get ahead of your [allergy symptoms](#). Once allergies are flaring, they become more difficult to treat. If you are on a good medication regimen before the pollens peak, it makes for a much more enjoyable season," Rabbat said.

More information: The Nemours Foundation has more about [seasonal allergies in children](#).

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