

## Spring Has Sprung ... A Season of Allergies

Maryland's spring time allergy season is fast approaching. Are you ready?

Did you know?

- Tree pollens are released early in the spring, sometimes as early as March.
- Grass pollens begin to increase in late spring and early summer.
- Weed pollens are released in late summer and early fall.
- Allergy symptoms appear as the pollen(s) to which a person is sensitive increase – one person's bad time may be another person's good time.
- Outdoor mold spores appear after a spring thaw but don't reach their peak until summer or early fall.
- Many people are allergic to more than one thing. Many children are allergic to molds and pollens.
- Signs of an allergy include chronic cold symptoms, especially when these cold symptoms come back at the same time each year and last more than a week or two.
- Cough is often a sign of asthma in children.

People with allergies do best when they work with their health care provider to anticipate the bad times and take simple steps to minimize exposure to their allergens.

Here are some Do's and Don'ts for allergy season:

### **DO**

- Keep windows closed at night to prevent pollens or molds from drifting into your home. If needed, use air conditioning to cool the air.
- Minimize early morning outside activity (between 5:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.)
- Stay indoors when the pollen count is high and on windy days when pollen and dust are blown about.
- Shower before bedtime to remove pollens.
- Take medications prescribed by your doctor regularly.
- After being outdoors, wash hands, change clothes, and wash hair to remove pollens.
- Brush pets when they come inside to remove pollen.
- Remain indoors when grass is cut and avoid playing in fields of tall grass if you are allergic to grass.

### **DON'T**

- Wait until your symptoms are severe to talk to your doctor. If you know you have springtime allergies, contact your doctor today.
- Take more medication than recommended.
- Hang sheets or clothing out to dry. Pollens and molds may collect in them.
- Don't grow too many or overwater indoor plants if you are allergic to mold.