

HealthNews

A Monthly Newsletter Provided by Lake Hospital System

It's the Season

bodyWINDSM

Your Monthly Guide to Good Health

for Sneezein'!

Spring allergies, also called seasonal allergic rhinitis, affect approximately 39.5 million people in the United States. If you find yourself feeling under the weather around the same time each year, you might be suffering from seasonal allergies. In the spring, allergies are typically triggered by grass and tree pollen.

Symptoms of seasonal allergies

- C Sneezing
- C Congestion
- C Runny nose
- C Scratchy throat
- C Watery eyes
- C Itchy nose, eyes or ears

Prevention

Fortunately, those who suffer from seasonal allergies don't always have to miss out on outdoor activities. According to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, there are precautions you can take to help prevent an allergic outbreak. Consider the following suggestions.

- C Stay abreast of the pollen count in your area. To view an accurate, local pollen count, visit the National Allergy Bureau online at www.aaaai.org/nab.

- C Don't plan outdoor activities early in the morning. Pollens are generally emitted between 5 and 10 a.m.
- C If you must mow the lawn or rake leaves, wear a filter mask.
- C Take a shower and wash your hair before going to bed every night.
- C Avoid hanging laundry outside to dry.
- C Beware of high mold spore counts in the evening or after a heavy rain.
- C Wash bedding weekly in hot water.
- C Try to use air conditioning rather than opening windows.

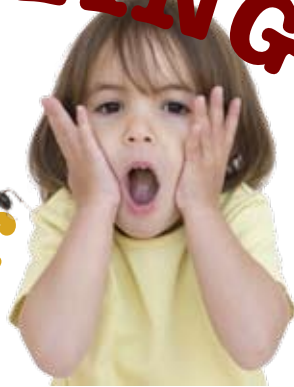
Treatment

Although there is no cure for allergies, allergy symptoms can be managed. Frequently, symptoms can be controlled effectively with antihistamines and nasal steroids (nose spray). In some cases, however, it is necessary to consult an allergist to determine whether a series of allergy shots, or allergen immunotherapy, is necessary.

If you suspect that you are suffering from seasonal allergies, consult a physician for diagnosis and treatment options.



Take the **STING** out of summer



Spring and summer bring many fun and exciting opportunities for parents to plan outdoor activities for their children. To make the most of your family's time outdoors, it is important to be aware of the appropriate steps to take in the event that a bee or insect stings or bites your child or a friend or family member.

Bites and stings

Bees, wasps, hornets, yellow jackets, fire ants and other insects have the potential to be troublesome. When an insect bites a person, it injects venom or other substances into the skin. The venom triggers an allergic reaction, the severity of which depends on an individual's sensitivity to the venom or substance. Most reactions to bites are mild and result in minor itching, stinging or swelling; however, a small percentage of people develop a severe reaction, anaphylaxis, to insect venom, according to the Mayo Clinic. Research indicates that thousands of people experience stings and that as many as 40 to 50 people die due to allergic reactions each year in the United States.

Reduce the Risk

Fortunately, there are steps you can take to reduce your child's risk of being bitten or stung in the first place.

- Dress your child in light-colored clothing.
- Do not allow your child to use scented or perfumed soap or shampoo.
- Because sweat aggravates bees, make sure that your child bathes daily and always wears clean clothes.
- Leave as little of your child's skin exposed as possible. Cover him or her with clothing.
- Teach your children to avoid playing next to flowering plants.

- Bees tend to be most active during late summer and early fall. Check for new nests during this time.
- Keep outdoor picnic tables, grills and outdoor play areas free of discarded food, which can attract wasps.
- If a bee is in your car, roll down the windows and slowly stop the car.

How to Respond to Bites and Stings



In the event of a mild reaction to a bite or sting, first relocate to a safe area to avoid additional stings. Do not squeeze the stinger; instead, scrape it off with a straight-edged object such as a credit card. Squeezing the stinger may cause more venom to be injected into the skin. Use soap and water to wash the site of the bite or sting. To reduce swelling, apply an ice pack. Even if the reaction seems mild, keep an eye out for signs of a more serious allergic reaction. Signs and symptoms of a severe reaction include difficulty breathing; swelling of the lips or throat; fainting; dizziness; confusion; rapid heartbeat; hives; and nausea, cramps and vomiting. If you notice any of these symptoms, call 911 immediately.

If you know that your child is allergic to insect stings, he or she should wear a medical ID bracelet that clearly states the allergy and carry an insect sting medical kit at all times.

Lake Hospital System Calendar of Events MAY

Get Healthy Lake County Lecture/Activity Series

Are you looking for information on how to eat better or become fit? If so, attend the Get Healthy Lake County lecture/activity series. It's designed to provide you with the health and lifestyle information you need to stay healthy. We meet monthly, except December. Call the Best of Health Line at 440-953-6000 or 1-800-454-9800 to register.

Veteran's Park, 5740 Hopkins Rd., Mentor – May 7, 6 pm
(Biking Basics)

Free Blood Pressure Screenings

We offer free screenings to check your blood pressure between visits to your physician. Stop by our urgent care centers during regular hours (call for hours: Mentor - 255-6400; Willowick - 585-3322; Madison - 639-0726; and Chardon - 286-8908). Or come on the following dates:

LakeEast Hospital – May 2, 9 am – 12 noon
LakeWest Hospital – May 16, 9 am – 12 noon

Label Reading Tours

Discover the tricks to interpreting food labels at a FREE label-reading tour. Space is limited. Call the Best of Health Line at 440-953-6000 or 1-800-454-9800 to register.

Giant Eagle, 6556 N. Ridge Rd., Madison – May 12, 6:30 pm

Get Healthy Lake County – 10,000 Steps Program

Walk your way to a healthier lifestyle - become a member of Get Healthy Lake County's 10,000 Steps Program. The surgeon general recommends 30 minutes of aerobic activity three times a week; if you walk 10,000 steps in a day (roughly five miles) you will exceed this recommendation. Every step you take counts toward the goal, so start walking today! Membership includes a pedometer, a calendar of step opportunities, a list of step equivalents and a step log. **Call the Best of Health Line at 440-953-6000 or 1-800-454-9800 for more information.**

Good Call!

If you suffer a sports injury, call Lake Hospital System's 24/7 sports injury hotline. A sports medicine adviser will decide whether you should treat the injury yourself, go to the ER, or see your doctor. If you don't have a doctor, the adviser will arrange a next-day appointment with a physician in our sports medicine network. **1-866-247-4806**

Lake Hospital System offers a wide variety of programs for men, women, seniors and families. Please log onto www.LHS.net or call the Best of Health Line at 440-953-6000 or 1-800-454-9800 for more information.