

# Ways to Manage Nasal Congestion from Allergies

Springtime is perfect for exploring the outdoors and taking in some fresh air, but nasal congestion can get in the way of this. It's one of the most common allergy symptoms and occurs because of the nasal passageways swelling with excess fluid. Along with prescription allergy medication, there are several other effective methods for relieving a stuffy nose.

## **STAY HYDRATED**

Drinking lots of fluids thins mucus and guides it out of your sinuses, which relieves the pressure that causes your nose to feel stuffy. Also, some over-the-counter allergy medication may dry out your sinuses, and drinking water or other fluids can counter this.

## **USE STEAM**

Whether it's from a shower or a humidifier, steam can help loosen mucus and relieve inflamed nasal passages.

## **SLEEP WITH YOUR HEAD ELEVATED**

Lying down can worsen congestion, since it causes the sinuses and nose to retain mucus. Additionally, sleeping on your side may cause the nostril closest to the bed to become congested. To prevent these issues and alleviate nighttime nasal congestion, sleep on your back and use an extra pillow.

## **USE OTC ALLERGY MEDICATION**

As the name suggests, antihistamines block histamines, which are the chemicals released by your body's reaction to allergens. Nasal congestion is one of the symptoms caused by histamines. Decongestants work by reducing swelling in your nose's blood vessels. Both options can supplement your prescription allergy treatment.

To learn more or get started with a personalized treatment plan, get in touch with the Carolina ENT team at (828) 322-2183.



# Find Relief with Allergy Immunotherapy

It can be frustrating if your allergy symptoms are interrupting your daily life and don't respond to medication, but allergy immunotherapy may be the solution for you. Immunotherapy involves building up a tolerance to an allergen over time and comes in the form of shots or drops taken under the tongue. It is often more effective than pills because it treats the cause of the allergies rather than simply relieving symptoms.

## How Do Allergy Shots and Drops Work?

Also known as subcutaneous immunotherapy, allergy shots are the most common form of immunotherapy. The process begins with the buildup phase, during which a small amount of allergen is injected into the upper arm once or twice a week for several months. The dosage is gradually increased at each visit.

Once you've reached the highest amount of allergen you can handle without experiencing symptoms, the maintenance phase begins. The dosage is no longer increased at each visit, and treatment typically lasts for three to five years.

Allergy drops follow the same process, but with allergens dripped under your tongue.

## What Outcomes Can I Expect?

Though relief will not be instantaneous, allergy immunotherapy will relieve symptoms during the first year of treatment and continue to improve them over the next several years. Immunotherapy may also decrease symptoms for other allergens and prevent new allergies from developing.

## What Are the Next Steps?

If you're interested in beginning allergy immunotherapy, our team can help. We'll work with you to determine whether allergy shots or drops would be a better fit for your needs and get you started with a personalized treatment plan.

**Take the first step to finding relief by calling the Carolina ENT team at (828) 322-2183 to schedule a consultation for allergy immunotherapy.**

# TIPS ←.....

## for Managing Spring Allergies

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Spring is a favorite season for many because everything outside is blooming—but it also means the air is rife with allergens. Also known as hay fever, spring allergies can result in symptoms like sneezing, congestion and a runny nose. Luckily, there's no shortage of ways to manage your spring allergies.

### KNOW YOUR TRIGGERS

Whether you're using over-the-counter or prescription medication, an effective management plan begins with an allergy test so you know what triggers your symptoms. This will help you determine which allergens you should avoid.

### REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE

Avoid allergy triggers by staying indoors on windy days, avoiding outdoor chores like lawnmowing that may stir up allergens, removing clothes you've worn outdoors, showering after working outdoors and avoiding handling drying laundry outdoors.

### TAKE CARE WHEN POLLEN COUNTS ARE HIGH

High pollen counts can cause seasonal allergies to flare up. Look up pollen counts for your area online or in your local media, and if they're expected to be high, start taking allergy medication. Pollen counts tend to be highest in the early morning, so it may be beneficial to avoid outdoor activity during that time.

### CARE FOR YOUR INDOOR AIR

There are several steps you can take to reduce allergens from the air in your home, including using high-efficiency filters in your air conditioning system, keeping a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter in rooms where you spend a lot of time and using a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter.

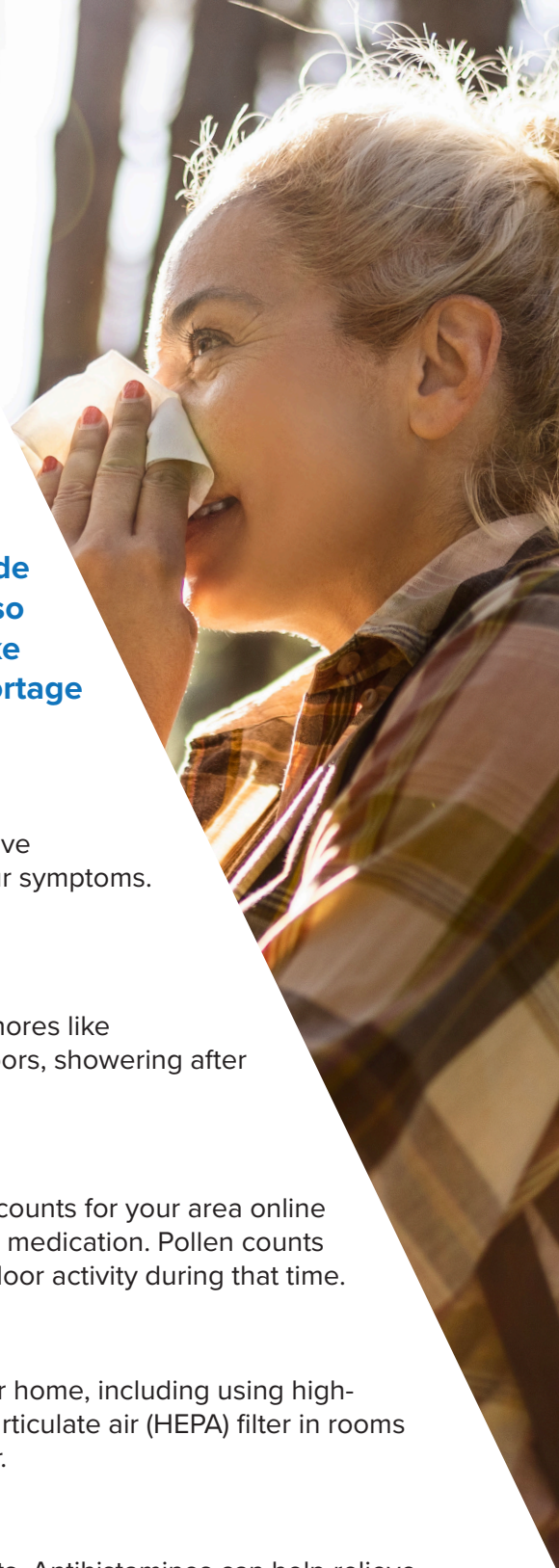
### TRY OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION

Options include antihistamines, corticosteroid nasal spray and decongestants. Antihistamines can help relieve symptoms like itching, sneezing, nasal congestion and watery eyes. Nasal sprays can relieve nasal symptoms, and decongestants reduce swelling in the nose's blood vessels.

### MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH AN ALLERGIST

If your symptoms do not respond to any of the above remedies, an allergist can provide a personalized treatment plan. Options may include prescription medication or allergy immunotherapy.

**If you or someone in your family has been struggling with allergy symptoms, our expert team can help. Take the first step to finding relief by calling (828) 322-2183 today to schedule an allergy consultation.**







# Want to Know More About **Allergies?**

If you're looking for additional details about allergies, never fear.

Our website is a great starting point if you want to learn more about allergy symptoms, testing and treatments. Visit [carolinaearnosethroat.com](http://carolinaearnosethroat.com) and select the Sinus & Allergy dropdown.

Here are a few other websites our allergy team recommends if you're looking for credible, up-to-date information about allergies.



## **Allergy & Asthma Network**

This organization unites and advocates for the 60 million Americans with asthma, allergies and related conditions. [allergyasthmanetwork.org](http://allergyasthmanetwork.org)



## **Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE)**

FARE supports people of all ages with food allergies by offering education and community. [foodallergy.com](http://foodallergy.com)



## **WebMD Allergy Resource Center**

This online publication offers articles focused on food allergies, indoor and outdoor allergies, asthma and managing symptoms. [allergicliving.com](http://allergicliving.com)

**Thank you for trusting Carolina ENT with your care.**

**If you need support for any ear, nose or throat concern, please get in touch with us today!**

[www.carolinaearnosethroat.com](http://www.carolinaearnosethroat.com)

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