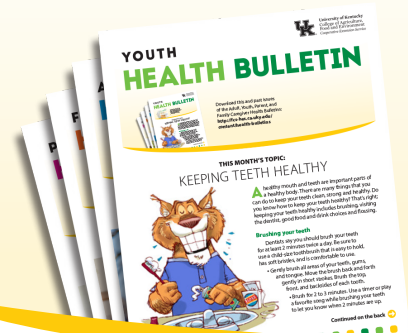


YOUTH HEALTH BULLETIN



MARCH 2023

Download this and past issues
of the Adult, Youth, Parent, and
Family Caregiver Health Bulletins:
[http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/
content/health-bulletins](http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins)

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: ALL ABOUT ALLERGIES

Have you ever started sneezing when you were outside or in the woods? Do you know someone who starts to itch if they are around a certain animal, like cats or dogs? These reactions could be a sign of an allergy.

An allergy is your body's reaction to certain plants, animals, foods, insect bites, or other things. Your immune system — the way your body works to keep your insides healthy and germ free — protects you from diseases by fighting germs like bacteria and viruses. Sometimes, our body's immune system overreacts and tries to fight normal things like grass, pet hair, or certain foods. The sneezing, itching, and other reactions you get

Imagine That.
THE DOCTOR SAYS
I'm allergic to
DOGS.



Continued on the next page →



Allergies are no fun, and a lot of people have them. If you have allergies, talk to your parents or doctor.

→ Continued from the previous page

with allergies is your body's way of trying to get rid of the things that it thinks are dangerous for you.

The things that cause allergies (grass, pollen, foods, pet byproducts, insects, etc.) are called allergens. When you notice that you have a reaction to the same thing more than once, it can be a sign that you are allergic to that thing.

Different people can be allergic to different things, but some things that a lot of people are allergic to are:

- **Dust mites:** tiny insects that live in dust
- **Pets:** dander (dry skin), saliva (spit), urine (pee), or other things from animals
- **Pollen:** the fine dust from plants like grass, flowers, or trees
- **Mold or mildew:** small living things that grow in damp places
- **Foods:** such as milk, wheat, soy, eggs, nuts, seafood, and peanuts
- **Latex:** stretchy stuff that makes some of the gloves doctors and dentists use

Allergens can cause a runny nose, itchy eyes and ears, sneezing, or a sore throat. Other items on the list, such as foods, can cause hives or a rash, stomach cramps, throwing



up, or diarrhea. Rarely, allergens can cause breathing problems like wheezing or asthma.

Some allergens, such as foods, are a problem all year long. Others might bother people only during certain times of the year. These are called seasonal allergies. For example, you might be allergic to pollen from trees, which is in the air only in the spring. Seasonal allergies happen a lot in places like Kentucky.

If you have symptoms of allergies, a doctor can help you feel better by figuring out what you are allergic to. Then, the doctor can help you and your parents come up with a plan to avoid certain things (if you are allergic to a food or animal, for example). Or they can give you medicine to take to help with your symptoms.

Allergies are no fun, and a lot of people have them. If you have allergies, talk to your parents or doctor about how to make them feel better. If you have a friend with allergies, you can help them stay away from things that they are not supposed to be around to keep them feeling good.

REFERENCE:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/allergies.html>



ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

Written by:

Katherine Jury, MS

Edited by: Alyssa Simms

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

Cartoon illustrations by:

Chris Ware (© University of Kentucky School of Human Environmental Sciences)

