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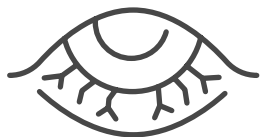
How to prevent and manage ocular allergies

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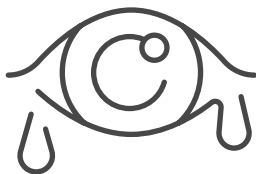


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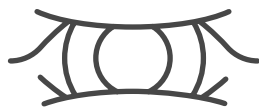
You may be suffering from allergic conjunctivitis if you have:



Red and itchy eyes¹



Watery eyes¹



Eyelids that are swollen¹



Symptoms usually affect both eyes.²

Wearing contact lenses could worsen symptoms, and they may not fit as they normally would when eyes are swollen.³

Many people also have a runny, stuffy and congested nose.¹

What are the most common allergens?

The **main causes** of eye allergies are:

- Pollen¹
- Household dust⁴ and dust mites¹
- Animal hair⁴
- Food allergies can also trigger allergic conjunctivitis symptoms⁵



The allergens responsible for the allergic reaction must be identified and measures taken to prevent exposure to these substances.⁶

Although there is no cure for allergies, there are many medications that can help control allergy symptoms.⁷

Recommendations and preventative measures

Whether at home or outdoors, there are many substances capable of triggering eye allergies, such as grass or tree pollens, mold, or cigarette smoke¹



The best way to reduce discomfort and prevent allergic reactions is to avoid trigger allergens as much as possible^{1,3}



Useful tips to avoid exposure to dust, dust mite and animal allergens:

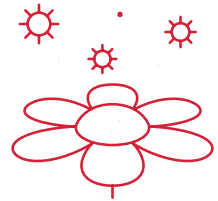
- Avoid having curtains, rugs, carpets and furniture that tend to act as dust traps in your bedroom⁸
- Use allergen-proof pillow and mattress covers, and washable cotton or synthetic blankets⁹
- Avoid feather bedding⁹
- Change air conditioning filters once a month¹⁰
- Clean regularly with a damp cloth or vacuum cleaner.¹⁰
- If you have to do housework, wear a face mask¹⁰
- Wash bed linen weekly in hot water (at least 54° C)¹⁰
- Keep your wool clothes in plastic zipper bags when they are not being used⁹
- If you have pets, do not allow them into your bedroom, and bath them every week to remove hair and other allergens¹⁰



Useful tips to avoid exposure to pollen allergens:

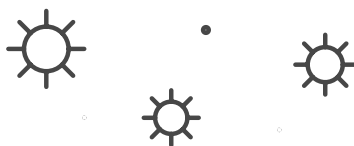
Pollen is a very fine powder produced by trees, flowers and grasses to fertilize plants.¹¹

- Check the pollen count on the weather forecast before leaving home⁷
- If possible stay indoors and limit your outdoor activities when the pollen count is high, or consider wearing a face mask^{7,13}
- Take a shower and wash your hair at night to remove any pollen built up during the day¹²
- Avoid mowing the lawn as this stirs up pollen¹²
- Wear sunglasses to help keep pollen out of your eyes, as well as to protect your eyes from sun exposure^{13,14}
- A wide brim hat may help reduce the amount of allergens blowing into your eyes¹²
- Keep your car windows closed when traveling¹⁵



Do you know your ocular allergy triggers?

One of the most effective ways to manage an ocular allergic reaction is to minimise exposure and avoid eye allergens^{6,12}



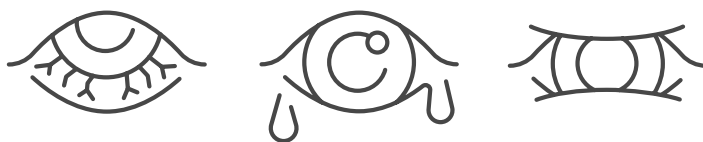
Allergies are caused when the body's immune system reacts to an allergen⁶



When an allergen comes into contact with the eyes, mast cells in the eye release histamine and other substances to fight off the allergen⁶



This reaction causes your eyes to become red, itchy and watery⁶



Sometimes eyes can react to other allergens that don't necessarily come into direct contact with the eye, such as:⁶

- certain foods
- insect bites or stings

Eye allergies could also be hereditary⁶

Medications that can help control ocular allergy symptoms?⁷

Some medications are available over the counter, while others require a prescription. Discuss your symptoms with your doctor or pharmacist to find which option is best for you⁷

Mast cell stabiliser eye drops

These prevent the release of histamine and other substances that cause allergy symptoms¹



Antihistamine eye drops

These reduce the itching, redness and swelling associated with eye allergies¹

Mast cell stabiliser and antihistamine eye drops

The combined action of these drops treat and prevent eye allergies, providing quick, long-lasting relief of itching, redness, tearing and burning¹

NSAID (Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) eye drops

These drops relieve itching, and may cause stinging when applied¹

Corticosteroid eye drops

These help treat chronic eye allergy symptoms. Treatment for more than 2 weeks should be done under the supervision of an ophthalmologist due to possible side effects¹



If you experience any of these eye allergy symptoms, visit your optometrist, ophthalmologist, family doctor or pharmacist for treatment recommendations





References: 1. American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI). Eye Allergies. Causes, Symptoms and Treatment [Internet]. Available from: <https://acaai.org/allergies/allergic-conditions/eye-allergy/>. [Accessed 15 October 2023]. 2. Medical News Today. What is allergic conjunctivitis? [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/157692>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 3. Optometric Care Associates. Don't let fall eye get you down [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.oca2020.com/2017/05/09/dont-let-fall-eye-allergies-get-you-down/>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 4. Shroff Eye. Eye allergies and how to prevent them [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.shroffeye.org/patient-information/conditions/eye-allergies-and-how-to-prevent-them/>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 5. Burks W. Patient education: Food allergy symptoms and diagnosis (Beyond the Basics). UpToDate [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.uptodate.com/contents/food-allergy-symptoms-and-diagnosis-beyond-the-basics/print>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 6. Mendoza O. What Are Eye Allergies? American Academy of Ophthalmology [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/allergies>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 7. WebMD. Everything You Need to Know About Allergy Relief. Best Treatments for Allergies. [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.webmd.com/allergies/everything-allergies?>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 8. NCBI Bookshelf. Dust mite allergies: Overview [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK447098/>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 9. Medicinenet. Allergy Treatment Begins at Home: Remedies & Products [Internet]. Available from: https://www.medicinenet.com/allergy_treatment_begins_at_home/article.htm. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 10. Mayo Clinic. Allergy-proof your home [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/allergies/in-depth/allergy/art-20049365>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 11. Healthline. Your Guide to Pollen Allergies and Their Treatment. [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.healthline.com/health/allergies/pollen>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 12. American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI). Eye Allergy Overview [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.aaaai.org/tools-for-the-public/conditions-library/allergies/eye-allergy-overview>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 13. Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA). Pollen Allergy [Internet]. Available from: <https://aafa.org/allergies/types-of-allergies/pollen-allergy/>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 14. Health Talks. Allergic Conjunctivitis [Internet]. Available from: <https://healthtalks.ae/diseases-conditions/allergic-conjunctivitis/>. [Accessed 13 October 2023]. 15. Allergy Associates of New Hampshire (AANH). Allergies [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.allergiesnh.com/allergies>. [Accessed 13 October 2023].

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