

Histamine and Seasonal Allergies:

Why Symptoms May Feel Stronger in Midlife

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As the trees and flowers start to bloom, seasonal allergies can return with a vengeance. Sneezing, congestion, itchy eyes, fatigue, and brain fog are all familiar symptoms. Many people assume it's simply "pollen season," but for those in midlife, these reactions can feel more intense or prolonged than in earlier years.



If your seasonal allergies feel worse this year, there may be several contributing factors. Emerging evidence suggests that allergies can develop or worsen after COVID infection. In addition, allergy seasons are becoming longer, with symptoms starting earlier and lasting later, likely due to climate-related shifts. Hormonal changes in midlife also play a role. Declining estrogen and progesterone influence immune function and can increase sensitivity to allergens while prolonging inflammatory responses. At the same time, midlife stress, disrupted sleep, and cumulative environmental exposures may further amplify histamine activity, making symptoms feel more severe than expected.

Histamine plays a central role in the body's immune response. When allergens trigger mast cells, histamine is released, leading to sneezing, a runny nose, itchy eyes, and sometimes fatigue or brain fog. Diet, alcohol, and other lifestyle factors can also influence histamine levels, which helps explain why symptoms can fluctuate from day to day.

While seasonal allergies are common, not all nasal or sinus symptoms are due to pollen. Persistent congestion, sinus pressure, facial pain, fever, or symptoms that occur outside the typical allergy season may point to a sinus infection, chronic rhinitis, mold exposure, or other underlying causes. If symptoms continue despite standard approaches, or if red flags appear, further evaluation may be warranted.

Supportive strategies for managing seasonal symptoms can be simple and practical. Saline nasal rinses, HEPA air filtration, and minimizing exposure to known triggers can help reduce the burden of pollen and dust. Changing clothes after time outdoors and showering before bed may also limit ongoing exposure. Over-the-counter options like Flonase can relieve congestion and inflammation, but nasal corticosteroids are not intended for indefinite daily use and should be used as directed. Gentle lifestyle practices - including adequate sleep, stress management, and a balanced diet - can further support immune balance and overall resilience during allergy season. In some cases, targeted supplements may offer additional support when used as part of a comprehensive approach.

Seasonal allergies are a common part of life, but midlife can bring subtle shifts that make symptoms feel stronger or less predictable. By understanding how histamine works and recognizing patterns, it's possible to move through allergy season with more clarity and comfort, while remaining aware of signs that something more than pollen may be at play.



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