

Cold Or Allergy: What's The Difference?

It's hard to tell sometimes whether your sneezing, and runny nose is the start of a cold or an allergy attack. Listed below are some clues on how you can tell the difference.

What To Look For	Colds	Allergies
How do the symptoms appear?	In sequence: first sneezing, runny nose, then congestion	All these symptoms tend to happen simultaneously
How long do these symptoms last?	Lasts about one to two weeks	Continue for as long as you are exposed to the allergen
Are you running a temperature?	Sometimes are accompanied by fevers	Not usually associated with a change in temperature
Are you sneezing a lot?	Sneezing is less common	Sneezing is more frequent especially two to three in a row
What color is your nasal discharge?	Often yellowish	Mostly clear, thin and watery

Dear Valued Patient!

Thank you for allowing us to participate in your medical care. We hope that our service was everything you expected.

If it was, we invite you to become a member of our PROP (Patients Referring Other Patients) program.

As members, not only will you have the satisfaction of knowing that you've helped another person get the best care possible, there's also the added bonus of:

- Receiving Priority Notification about any discounts and offers on many of the services we offer throughout the year.
- Being one of few select patients who are part of our Quarterly Gift Program.
- Getting 10% discount card (good for a whole year) towards any services not covered by your insurance*.

And even better, the patient you refer also gets a 10% discount on any services not covered by their insurance*.

So help us to help others:

Breathe Better, Sleep Better, Live Better.

Prop each other up!

* this is a limited one time offer, not to be combined with any other offer. This offer does NOT extend to any services warranted by your insurance including but not limited to copays, coinsurances and deductibles.

WHY DO I HAVE ALLERGIES?

&

ANSWERS TO OTHER TOP 5 MOST
COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS



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What's An Allergy?

Forty-five million Americans suffer from a recurring problem called allergy. Allergic rhinitis was once known as hay fever because workers would sneeze and develop nasal and sinus congestion when they worked around hay in the fields. Hay fever, asthma, and eczema are the most common symptoms of an allergic reaction.

Allergy symptoms appear when the body's immune system begins to respond to a substance as though it were a dangerous invader (called an antigen or allergen). It does this by sending specific defenders called antibodies to the entry site. The battle between allergen and antibody results in a release of chemical mediators, such as histamine, into the bloodstream. Those chemical mediators cause changes in the body, which produce the symptoms that we feel.

Is It A Cold or Is It An Allergy?

Symptoms of an allergy can sometimes mimic those of a cold in that you may have itchy, watery eyes, sneezing, nasal stuffiness, nasal congestion and drainage, and sometimes a headache. Yet, there are slight differences that help distinguish the two—like how long the symptoms last and in what sequence they appear (Refer to the “Cold Or Allergy” table on the back). Some people may even experience hearing changes, scratchy sore throats, hoarseness, and cough.

Other less common symptoms include balance disturbances, swelling in face or throat tissues, skin irritations, and even respiratory problems and asthma.

Some allergy sufferers experience symptoms all year. Others find certain seasons bring on attacks.

Why Am I Allergic?

Anything can be an allergen. Some substances, because of their chemical makeup, are more prone to generate an allergic response in humans. Pollens, food, mold, dust, feathers, animal dander, chemicals, drugs such as penicillin, and environmental pollutants commonly cause many to suffer allergic reactions.

Hay fever is caused by pollen. The most significant cause of hay fever in the United States is ragweed. It begins pollinating in late August and continues until the first frost. Late springtime pollens come from the grasses and springtime hay fever is most often caused by pollens of trees.



Certain allergens are always present. These include house dust, pets, or molds.

Which Allergy Treatment Is Right For Me?

Allergy symptom control is most successful when multiple management approaches are used simultaneously. Minimizing exposure to allergens, managing symptoms with medications, and desensitization with allergy shots are all methods that can be useful in controlling allergic symptoms.

Medications properly used can be very helpful. Over the counter (OTC) drugs can be beneficial, but some cause drowsiness (for more information on OTCs ask for our brochure). Sometimes prescription medications offer the best chance for good control.

Immunotherapy, or allergy shots, provide the only treatment method that can offer lasting relief or cure from allergies. Before beginning a series of such shots, allergy testing must be performed.

Do I Need To Get Treated?

Allergies are rarely life threatening, but often cause lost workdays, decreased work efficiency, poor school performance, and less enjoyment of life. It is common for allergy sufferers to develop sinus or respiratory infections if allergy symptoms are not controlled. And considering the millions spent in anti-allergy medications and the cost of lost work time, allergies cannot be considered a minor problem.

So if you haven't done so, speak with a doctor who specializes in managing and treating allergies. Even though you may think you know what you're allergic to, allergy testing can give you more specific answers. Working with a doctor can also help you to manage those symptoms long term so you can enjoy the outdoors, more often.

For a complimentary pamphlet containing information on allergy avoidance products as well as helpful hints on how to allergy proof your home, e-mail us at: westsideent@mac.com.

*Adapted from an American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery brochure.