

ALLERGIES SURVIVAL GUIDE

Spring is just around the corner, and so are all those spring allergies.

As the trees bloom and the grass grows, anyone with allergies knows the debilitating symptoms: sneezing, runny nose, itchy, watery eyes. Even with shots and medicines, people with allergies can still suffer.

Allergist Dr. Clifford Bassett stopped by **The Early Show** to guide viewers through five allergy survival tips to help alleviate the worst of the symptoms:

1. **CHECK THE POLLEN COUNT.** Websites such as www.aaaai.org/nab (American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology) will provide you with a neighborhood allergy forecast

2. **ADJUST OUTDOOR ACTIVITY** Consider exercising indoors on very high pollen days (if you are sensitive to seasonal pollens present in the air) or perhaps exercise later in the day (certain pollens are higher in the early to mid morning). Higher levels of pollens are usually found on warm, dry and windy days and lower levels of seasonal pollens on windless, wet and cloudy days.

3 **CLEAR INDOOR AIR.** At home or when driving, keep windows closed and set air conditioner on re-circulate to keep out the pollens. Clean filters in room air conditioners frequently during the "pollen" season to get best efficiency and consider a central air-filtration system for your home.

4. **WASH WISELY.** Shower and shampoo your hair every night, and change your clothing, wash your glasses, brush off your shoes before entering your bedroom to remove pollen/molds that collect during the day.

Gently irrigate your eyelids (while your eyes are closed) with a mild, tear free "baby" shampoo to remove excess allergens and pollutants which may have accumulated. Check with your provider before (especially if you wear contact lenses or have other eye problems) to learn whether anti-allergy eye and/or moisturizing drops may also be helpful and safe.

5. **AVOID FOOD CROSS-REACTIONS.** Ingesting fruits such as apple and pears as well as hazelnut may cause an allergy reaction (tingling of the mouth, itchy throat) if you have seasonal tree pollen allergies due to a cross-reaction between the proteins in these fruits and the pollens. Melons, tomatoes and oranges may cross react with grass pollens and if you are sensitive to weed pollens watch out for possible cross reactivity to melons, chamomile tea, and banana.

UPCOMING ALLERGY SEASON -- It promises to be bad with all the wet winter weather we've had in parts of the country that are particularly pollen prone. So get ready!

For much more on allergy relief, go to <http://www.allergyandasthmarelief.org>.