

## Eye Allergy:

Nothing is more irritating than the feeling that there is something in your eye. But if your eyes are red and irritated, and you don't see anything in them, it could be allergies. Symptoms can occur independently but usually accompany the sneezing, sniffing or stuffy nose related to nasal allergies. An allergist can determine whether an eye allergy is the source of your symptoms.

## Eye Allergy Symptoms:

- Itching
- Redness
- Burning
- Clear, watery discharge

## Eye Allergy Triggers:

- Outdoor allergens, such as pollens from grass, trees and weeds
- Indoor allergens, such as pet dander, dust mites and mold
- Irritants, such as cigarette smoke, perfume and diesel exhaust

## Eye Allergy Management and Treatment:

Avoid triggers by making changes to your home and your routine.

- Keep windows closed during high pollen periods; use air conditioning in your home and car.
- Wear glasses or sunglasses when outdoors to keep pollen out of your eyes.
- Use "mite-proof" bedding covers to limit exposure to dust mites, and a dehumidifier to control mold.
- Wash your hands after petting any animal.

Control some symptoms with nonprescription medications, sold over the counter:

- Artificial tears
- Decongestant eyedrops (don't use eyedrops for "red eye" longer than a week, or they can make things worse)
- Oral antihistamines (note that they may dry your eyes and make your symptoms worse)
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See your doctor for prescription medications, which may be more effective:

- Eyedrops (decongestant, antihistamine, mast cell stabilizer, corticosteroid, NSAID)
- Allergy shots (immunotherapy)
- Nonsedating oral antihistamines (note that they may dry your eyes and make your symptoms worse)