

Use an antihistamine before allergy symptoms start

Spring is finally here or, at least that's what your stuffed up nose is telling you.

Watery eyes, runny noses and endless sneezing are familiar hayfever signs to over three million Canadians.

But those aren't the only allergies on the rise.

Living in dust are microscopic creatures called dust mites that make thousands of Canadians miserable.

If it isn't dust that makes them sneeze, weep or itch, the allergen could be animal hair, commonly from cats and dogs, smoke, tree or grass pollen, mold, feathers and even some foods.

While avoidance can work at home, on the job many Canadians don't have that level of control.

Dust mites lurk in the carpet, in upholstered chairs and even inside computer keyboards.

So what do you do when avoidance is impossible? Toronto pharmacist, David Guttman has a few suggestions.

"Antihistamines are a safe, effective way to deal with allergy symptoms... and the best time to take an antihistamine is before symptoms develop.

"I advise my customers to take their antihistamine regularly throughout the allergy season to keep their symptoms under control."

The following are some seasonal survival tips:

• What's Bugging You?

Learn more about what triggers your symptoms then avoid or reduce situations where you are likely to be exposed.

• Achoo

Keep windows, air vents and doors closed to keep pollen out, especially in the early morning and late afternoon, when pollen rises and then falls as the temperature drops.

• Fresh & Clean

Dust surfaces regularly with a damp cloth to prevent pollen collecting around the house.

Invest in a vacuum cleaner with a good filter or a water reservoir to ensure that pollen in your carpet is not recirculated.

• Man's Best Friend

There's no such thing as a non-

HEALTH

allergenic cat or dog.

During the pollen season, pets can bring in a lot of pollen on their fur. If you can't part with an old fam-

If tree pollen is your problem, avoid planting the major pollen-producing trees such as birch, ash, maple, poplar, oak or walnut close to your home.

Remember most pollen remains within 10 metres of the plant.

• Relief

Keep a good supply of your preferred hayfever treatment on hand.

Getting the most from your Antihistamine

• Follow the Leader

Always follow the package directions. Check if the medication is designed to pro-

vide 12- or 24-hour relief. Do not take a higher dose than is recommended.

• Less Can Be More

Use the lowest effective dose of antihistamine before exposure. If you wait until symptoms become unbearable, it will take a higher dose of the drug to reverse the cycle.

• Get Active

Choose an antihistamine that reflects your lifestyle. To stay alert, choose a product that lets you perform normally.

• Not All Are Alike

The active ingredient in most antihistamines cannot begin to work until it has been transformed by the liver.

This process converts a drug's molecule into metabolites.

• Talk To An Expert

Ask your pharmacist or physician for help in finding the right product for your allergies.

Keep windows, air vents and doors closed to keep pollen out, especially in the early morning and late afternoon, when pollen rises and then falls as the temperature drops.

ily friend, try to keep pets out of the house, or at the very least, the bedroom.

• Tree Smarts


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Markham Stouffville Hospital

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will be held on
Tuesday, June 24, 1997
at 7:00 p.m.
in the Auditorium of
Markham Stouffville Hospital
381 Church Street
Markham, Ontario

Amendments to By-laws James R. MacLean
for ratification will Secretary
be presented