

THIS
MAGAZINE
PAYS FOR
ITSELF!

✓ HUNDREDS OF WAYS TO SAVE

all you

Issue 31, March 26, 2010

★ ENJOY LIFE FOR LESS

PACKED WITH

- ☐ COUPONS!
- ☐ PUZZLES!
- ☐ GREAT DEALS!

LOSE 8 POUNDS THIS MONTH

The simple plan
that gets results

**FAST
SPRING
CLEANING**

Big jobs
made easy

Be a savings pro

- ✓ Use a price book
- ✓ Try cost-cutting gadgets
- ✓ Snap up budget fashion

Celebrate Easter!

Serve a tasty family
brunch



○ Eat healthy on
a tight budget



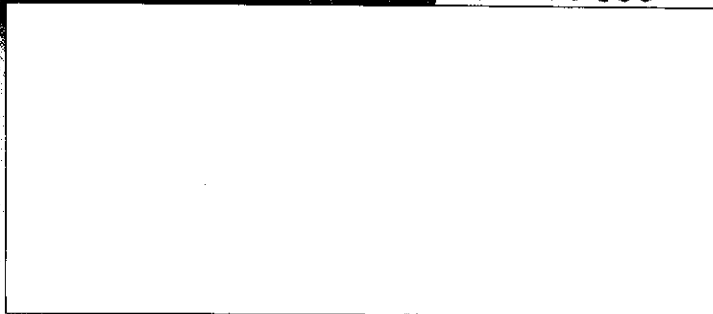
○ Update
your cut
and style



○ Fight back
against
spring
allergies



○ Redo rooms
for little \$\$\$





Get rid of dust mites



Buy the right vacuum



Wash away irritants



Take vitamins

Defend yourself against spring allergies

Get in fighting form before the sniffly season starts



shield your eyes



Give your pet a bath

Springtime means flowers, outdoor fun and...the sneezing, itchy eyes and runny nose that come with allergies. Don't be sidelined this year. The three-week plan here can help you take action now so you'll be able to stop allergies before they start.

By Lindsay Benjamin



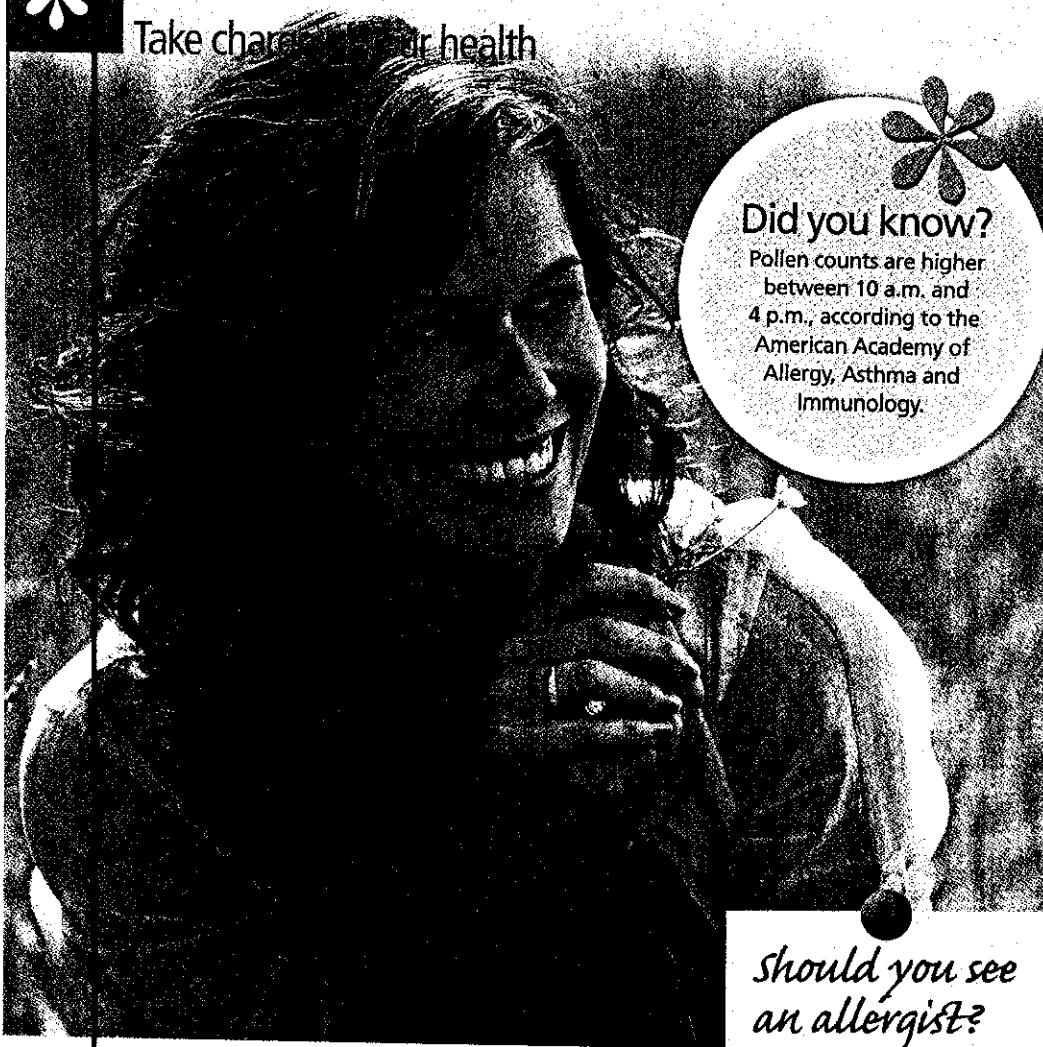
Get ahead

Log onto pollen.com to get a four-day allergy forecast. To determine the start of the season in your area, check the seasonal pollen patterns map at nasonex.com.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: BLEND IMAGES/VEER, MASTERFILE, ROYALTY-FREE (3), WESTEND/ISTOCK, FLIRT PHOTOGRAPHY/VEER



Take charge of your health



Did you know?

Pollen counts are higher between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., according to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology.



Should you see an allergist?

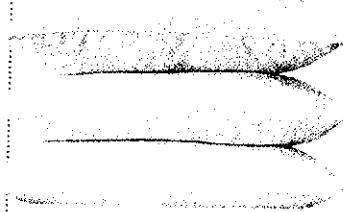
Yes, if any of these situations apply to you.

☒ **Medications haven't helped.** See a specialist if you've been taking an over-the-counter or prescription drug for two weeks and you haven't noticed a difference.

☒ **You want to get at the cause of your allergies.** A skin-prick test can help you and your doctor determine what you're reacting to, target your treatment and know which irritants to avoid.

☒ **You're considering getting allergy shots.** Over time, these injections gradually expose your body to allergens, allowing you to build your tolerance to them. It can take up to five years for the shots to become fully effective.

Put yourself first. There appears to be a link between your allergies and how well you care for yourself. If you're eating right, getting regular exercise and sleeping seven to nine hours a night, the levels of the stress hormones in your body should decrease, improving your allergy symptoms. It takes time to adapt to a new routine, so start adopting better health habits this week.



WEEK

1

Build up your defenses

Keeping your immune system in tip-top shape is key to decreasing allergy symptoms.

Get more vitamin D.

A recent study from Harvard Medical School found that children who had low levels of vitamin D, which regulates the immune system, had more evidence of allergies. If you don't already take a vitamin D supplement, you might want to start. Multivitamins typically contain 400 international units of D, but many experts recommend that adults take 800 to 1,000 IUs per day to reap the health benefits.



WEEK

2

Tackle household allergens

Take these extra steps to eliminate irritants.

Say so long to dust mites.

If you sneeze, cough or have watery eyes, a runny nose or congestion while you're in bed, these pesky microscopic creatures could be to blame. They're the most common cause of year-round allergies. To cut down on dust mites, wash bedding in 130°F water weekly and cover mattresses and box springs with plastic covers. During warm weather, use your air conditioning regularly to reduce humidity, which allows the tiny organisms to thrive.

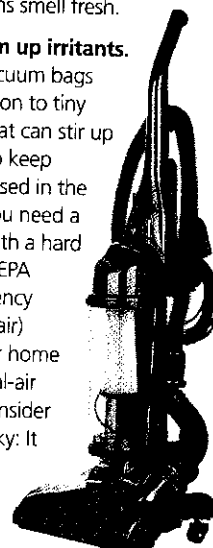
Toss out the old. To reduce the allergens you inhale indoors, change the filters in your furnace and air-conditioning unit at least every three months. The best type of filter blocks at least 85 percent of particles. (Try a filter with a MERV rating of 11 or 12, available at most hardware stores.)

Clear the air naturally.

Home deodorizing products (including plug-in ones) emit particles that can irritate your nose and eyes. Instead, simmer a mixture of water, orange slices and cloves on the stove; it's a natural and more allergy-friendly way to make rooms smell fresh.

Vacuum up irritants.

Regular vacuum bags don't hold on to tiny particles that can stir up allergies. To keep them enclosed in the vacuum, you need a machine with a hard shell or a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filter. If your home has a central-air vacuum, consider yourself lucky: It dumps the allergens outside as it cleans.



FROM TOP: MASTERFILE ROYALTY-FREE, ISTOCKPHOTO (3)

Tip strip

MARCH 26, 2010

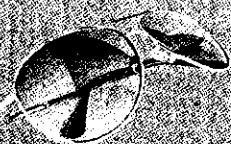


Stop sniffing and sneezing

Use these tips to keep symptoms at bay once allergy season is in full swing.

✓ Check the weather
Strong gusts of wind or high humidity can mean more pollen and other allergens in the air. If those conditions are forecast, try to spend more time indoors.

✓ Slip on sunglasses
Shades can keep pollen from getting in your eyes.



✓ Take a breather from polluted air
If your friends, co-workers or family members smoke, try to avoid them when they light up. The smoke can irritate your lungs, worsening allergies.

✓ Keep the windows shut
Doing so prevents outdoor allergens from infiltrating your home.

✓ Stop your dog at the door

When your pup comes in from outside, rub it down with a towel to keep it from tracking pollen into the house.



✓ Avoid strong odors
If allergens have already made your eyes and nose sensitive, pungent smells such as paint, perfume or strong lotions can irritate them further.

✓ Rinse off before bed
Airborne allergens can linger in your hair. Take a shower before you hit the hay so you won't bring them to bed with you.

✓ Keep your nose clear
After you've been outdoors (especially when the pollen count is high), wash out your nose with a saline rinse to keep irritants from lingering and to reduce symptoms.



allyou



WEEK
3

Stock your medicine cabinet

With these remedies on hand, you'll be prepared for unexpected symptoms.

Antihistamine

ADDRESSES: Runny nose, itching and sneezing.

HOW IT WORKS Prevents the effects of histamine, a chemical that causes inflammation and allergy symptoms.

⊛ **Over the counter:**

(Claritin, Benadryl, Zyrtec).

⊛ **When to take:** Start three to four days before allergy season begins in your area.

⊗ **Downside:** These meds can cause drowsiness.

Decongestant

ADDRESSES: Congestion and runny nose.

HOW IT WORKS Cuts down on nasal inflammation.

⊛ **Over the counter:**

(Sudafed, Zyrtec-D).

⊛ **Time to take:** Daily, as soon as symptoms develop.

⊗ **Downsides:** These drugs raise your blood pressure, which can be dangerous if you have a heart condition. Other possible side effects include urinary retention and difficulty sleeping.

Saline rinse

ADDRESSES: Congestion and an itchy, runny nose.

HOW IT WORKS With a neti pot or a saline nasal spray or wash, rinse out your sinuses, flushing out particles that cause irritation.

⊛ **Over the counter:**

(NeilMed sinus rinse).

⊛ **When to take:** After exposure to irritants or twice a day when you feel congested.

⊗ **Downside:** It can take a few tries to get the hang of it.

Nasal spray

ADDRESSES: Congestion

HOW IT WORKS Shrinks inflamed nasal tissue.

⊛ **Over the counter:** (Afrin).

⊛ **Time to take:** Can be used twice per day up to three days. These meds shrink blood vessels and nasal tissue, reducing mucus.

⊗ **Downsides:** After several days' use, the blood vessels aren't as responsive to the spray, so you need to use more frequent and higher doses to experience relief.

Corticosteroid

ADDRESSES: Congestion, itchy, runny nose and sneezing.

HOW IT WORKS Reduces inflammation caused by allergies. (These are different from the kinds of steroids used by some athletes.)

⊛ **By prescription:** Nasal sprays (Flonase, Nasonex), pills (Sterapred) and eyedrops (Maxidex, Pred Forte, FML).

⊛ **When to take:** Eyedrops are taken on an as-needed basis. Use nasal sprays daily, starting one to two weeks before allergy season to prevent symptoms and throughout the spring months. Corticosteroid pills, however, aren't meant for continuous use. Allergists prescribe them as a quick fix when symptoms become unbearable.

⊗ **Downside:** The sprays can cause nosebleeds if they're not used properly, so be sure to have your doctor show you how to administer the drug before you start taking it.

Sources: Alan P. Baptist, MD, assistant professor of allergy and immunology at the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor; Jackie Eghrari-Sabet, MD, founder of Family Allergy and Asthma Care in Frederick and Montgomery counties, Md.; David D. Hagan, MD, medical director at the Vanderbilt Asthma, Sinus and Allergy Program in Nashville, Tenn.; James Sublett, MD, vice chairman of the Indoor Environments Committee for the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology