

## Allergies in Adolescents

Allergies are reactions by immune system that are abnormal in nature to stuff that are usually harmless to majority of the people. When somebody is allergic to something the immune system of that person gets confused and thinks that the substance is detrimental to the body. The substances causing allergic reactions are known as allergens. The examples of allergens are dust, food, plant pollen, medicine etc. The body produces antibodies to protect itself from these allergens. The antibodies make certain cells present in the system to let chemicals to mix with the bloodstream and one of them is histamine. This chemical then acts on nose, eyes, skin, lungs, gastrointestinal tract and results in allergic reaction symptoms. Exposure to the same chemicals in future triggers same response to the antibodies again meaning every time one comes in contact with the same allergen, allergic reaction is produced in the body.

Allergic reactions can range from mild symptoms like runny nose to more severe ones such as difficulty in breathing. Teenagers suffering from asthma often have allergic reaction to cold and get asthma attack is another example of allergies. Some kinds of allergies trigger multiple symptoms. Allergic reactions in very rare cases also produce severe reaction known as "anaphylaxis" for which the signs are difficulty in breathing, difficulty in swallowing, swelling in tongue, lips and throat and dizziness. This allergic reaction occurs as soon as the system is exposed to substances that trigger allergic reactions like peanut although some reactions are delayed by as much as four hours.

The reasons why people get allergies can be various and one of the reasons could be hereditary but that that does not necessarily mean that children are bound to get allergies from their parents. Some of the common allergens include food, airborne particles, insect bite and sting, medicines, chemicals etc. Food allergies typically occur in infants and usually vanish as the child grows. The list of food allergens includes milk & dairy products, wheat, soy, eggs, peanuts, and seafood. Some people are allergic to stings and bites of certain insects. The venom in the bite is the one which actually causes reaction and can be as serious as anaphylactic in some teens. Some teens are also allergic to airborne particles which are also known as environmental allergens. They are also the commonest of all the allergens. Examples of these allergens include dust mites, animal dander, mold spores, grass pollens, trees and ragweed. Some adolescents are also allergic to certain antibiotic medicines. Another common allergen is chemical, certain chemicals present in laundry detergents or cosmetics can cause rashes that are itchy in nature.

Allergists usually treat allergic problems. They may ask questions like symptoms of the allergy and whether it is hereditary. They may also prescribe certain

diagnostic tests like blood or skin test depending on the type of allergy. The best way to treat allergies is to completely avoid the substances that cause allergies. However there are certain medications and injections are also available to treat allergies.

One can follow certain things to avoid allergies like people who have food allergies that contain should peanuts and any food containing smallest amount of peanuts. Also avoid using cosmetic that contain chemicals allergic to the skin. One can also avoid airborne allergies by keeping pets in restricted areas and away from bedroom. Replace carpets and rugs from time to time. Avoid keeping things that accumulate dust. And also clean the room and house frequently.

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