

STILL Sneezing? Five Tips to Help You Survive This Never-ending Allergy Season

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Warm weather screams sunshine, bike rides, and beach workouts, but these favorable temps also spell tough times for those of us with allergies. Typically we think of pollen season letting up by end of spring, but what with the "pollen vortex" (the aftermath of such a cold winters!) extending the season and with trees, grass and weeds passing the pollen baton through the summer, the frustrating effects may feel never-ending.

Seasonal allergies are present all year round. In springtime, it's pollen; in summer, it's grass; in fall, it's ragweed; and come winter, it's mold. It all just depends what you're allergic to, says allergy specialist Susanne Bennett, D.C., CCSP, founder of the Wellness For Life Center in Santa Monica, California, and author of *The 7-Day Allergy Makeover*. Things tend to be most calm in the morning though, says Dr. Bennett, so if you plan to exercise outside, do it first thing in the morning. Here are her 5 tips to help you stay in the clear this pollen season.

1. Synthetic clothing is a no-no. Read: static. And what happens with static? It makes things stick to you. "This type of fabric will attract pollen to stick to it, and then it will come with you when you get into your car or walk into your apartment after working out,"

says Dr. Bennett. Try wearing clothing that is made of cotton when possible (we know it can be hot!), and be sure to push the refresher button in your car (the one that makes air circulate). This will help keep the air in your car clean.

2. If you're not going home right after an outdoor workout, put your clothes into a plastic bag. This will keep the pollen contained to just the clothing and won't allow it to spread around your gym bag or into your vehicle. And same goes for shoes—keep them in a bag or even the box they came in. As soon as you get home, throw your dirty laundry right into the washing machine.
3. Opt for glasses over contacts when possible. When you run or cycle, there's a chance you will get not only pollen, but also dirt and bugs in your eyes. (Ew!) And there's nothing worse than getting something stuck in your contact. "Wear large, goggle style glasses if you can get them made," says Dr. Bennett. "And make sure they are polarized to protect your eyes from ultraviolet light."
4. Bennett also recommends doing an eye cleansing a couple times a week using a shot glass, room temperature water, and salt. Here's a video how-to.
5. Get a HEPA Filter with charcoal for your bedroom. This will make for better sleep at night, uninterrupted by allergies. It's especially helpful on windy days when pollen is flying all over the place. (Pro tip: keep your windows shut on these high speed days to avoid letting pollen in). "HEPA will absorb dust, mold, and pollen while charcoal absorbs toxins and volatile organic compounds," says Bennett.