

What happens in an allergic reaction?

When you encounter an allergen your immune system overreacts and produces antibodies which are normally meant to protect you. However, with allergies, too many antibodies are produced. These antibodies attach themselves to target tissues and cause the release of inflammatory chemicals. These chemicals then cause your allergy symptoms.



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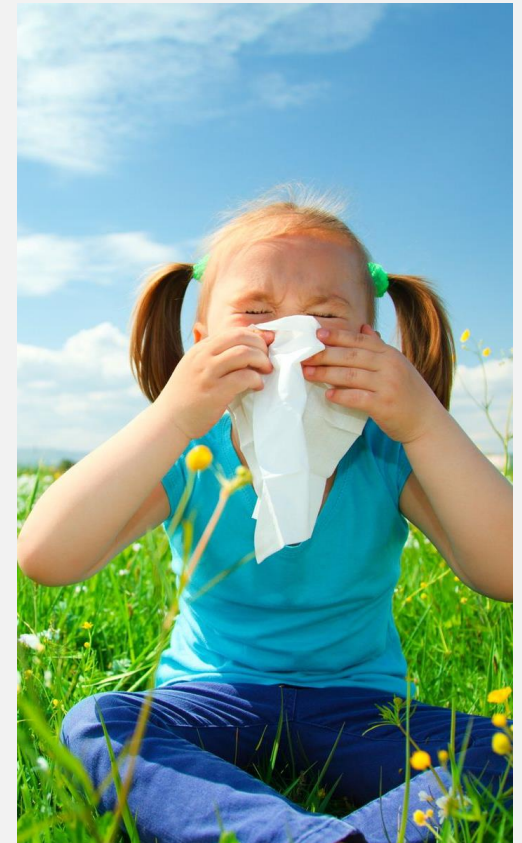
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Allergies





What is an Allergy?

An allergy is an unpleasant physical reaction to a substance to which you are hypersensitive. These substances are called allergens. You can develop an allergy at any age, but for most people symptoms appear during early childhood.

How do you come in contact with allergens?

- Breathe them in from the air
- Swallow them in food and drink
- Absorb them through skin
- Injections

Allergy Symptoms

- Nose-nasal itching, congestion, sneezing, post-nasal drip, watery discharge
- Eyes-itching, redness, swelling, tearing, other conjunctivitis symptoms
- Ears-fluid in middle ear, recurrent infections
- Lungs-shortness of breath, wheezing, chest tightness, coughing
- Skin-itchy welts or hives, dry itchy rash, blistering rash, intense itching
- Digestive Tract-stomach cramps, vomiting, diarrhea
- Other symptoms include headaches, fatigue, hyperactivity, depression