

A Coughing, Wheezing, Itchy-Eyed Spring

Does this sound like you? An estimated 20 million Americans suffer from asthma. And if you have asthma, understanding and controlling your allergies may be key to reducing your asthma symptoms.

The most common symptoms of asthma include:

- Cough,
- Chest tightness,
- Shortness of breath, and
- Wheezing.

The most common triggers for asthma are allergies. Through a complex reaction, allergens such as dust and mold cause the lungs and airways to become inflamed and swollen. If you've noticed a connection between seasonal allergies and asthma, talk to your doctor. You may benefit from seeing an allergist who can help you better understand what you are allergic to, how to avoid it, and how to treat your allergy symptoms.

Asthma symptoms can also be triggered by other factors, including:

- Tobacco smoke,
- Strong odors,
- Weather changes,
- Viral or sinus infections,
- Exercise,
- Reflux disease,
- Certain medications,
- Foods, and
- Emotional anxiety.

Asthma can be a tricky condition, and the more you understand your triggers, the better you will be able to manage it. People with asthma should also have an Asthma Action Plan. Your doctor can work with you to develop this plan, which will include understanding your triggers, knowing what medications to take and when, and recognizing the symptoms that require treatment.

For more information about allergies and asthma, visit www.aafa.org.

Source: American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology