

May 2016



Welcome to this month's edition of *Healthline*. In this issue, we will be focusing on the importance of *Allergies*.



Save the Date! Upcoming Events:

May 19, 2016
Health & Wellness Seminar
Topic: Allergies
Where: Council Chambers
Time: 2:30p.m. – 3:30 p.m

Managing Allergies At Work

It's hard enough to cope with allergies on the weekend, but dealing with allergies at work is even more challenging! Ask anyone who's ever dozed off in the middle of an important meeting because of allergy symptoms or medications. Allergy symptoms are the Number 2 reason adults miss work.

How can you manage allergies at work?

Experts recommend a three-pronged approach that includes:

- 🌸 Accurate diagnosis
- 🌸 Environmental control
- 🌸 Medication

Get Allergy Tests

Many people assume they know what triggers their allergies, but they can be dead wrong. Once you've seen an allergist for an accurate assessment of your allergies, it's time to figure out how to minimize exposure to the allergens. That's easier to do at home, where you can control the environment, but there are things you can do at work to try to keep allergens at bay.

Manage your Work Environment to Limit Allergens

Many large office buildings already have air filtration systems, but smaller offices are more likely to have problems. You can ask that the air filters be changed to high-efficiency filters. If you have your own office, you can also bring in a portable HEPA filter for that space. Other things you can do to improve your office environment:

- 🌸 Ask to have carpet removed or replaced from your office/cubicle.
- 🌸 Turn on the AC which can help to clear out some allergens.
- 🌸 Avoid bringing soft items into your office, like pillows for your chair or collectible stuffed animals. (Allergens can collect on them)
- 🌸 If you see water damage in the office, ask to have it fixed—mold can collect there.
- 🌸 Plan your schedule carefully. If you see that the forecast is for a high pollen count, consider eating in the office cafeteria that day instead of going out to lunch.

Find the Right Allergy Medication for You

To avoid meandering through your workday like a zombie, first try treating individual symptoms rather than using systematic medications. For example, if congestion is what's driving you crazy, use nasal sprays. If it's watery eyes, use eye drops like natural tears to clear the allergens from the eyes. No matter which allergy medication you choose, be proactive in your treatment.



Seasonal Allergies

Allergens are in the air all the time, but many plants have a certain time of year during which they pollinate. Seasonal allergies can cause the same symptoms as other allergies, such as sneezing, itchy and watery eyes, and asthma, and can become acute. Texas is known for its pollen producing plants, as well as for the seasonal allergies they cause.

Spring

- 🌸 Ash
- 🌸 Elm
- 🌸 Pine
- 🌸 Oak
- 🌸 Pecan
- 🌸 Hickory
- 🌸 Poplar
- 🌸 Walnut

Summer/Early Fall

- 🌸 Ragweed
- 🌸 Bermuda Grass

Autum/Winter

Although colder weather often brings seasonal allergy relief to many, residents in the Hill Country of Texas will often see an increase in allergy symptoms. December to February is the pollination season for cedar, its buoyant pollen covers cars and sidewalks and can cause severe allergic reactions.



Source:
Texas Sinus Center

Indoor Allergies

It's well known that people can be allergic to things outside, but did you know that indoor allergies are just as prevalent? In some instances patients have allergies to items in their homes and don't even realize that those allergens are triggering their allergic reactions. Common indoor allergies include:

- 🌸 Dust
- 🌸 Dust mites
- 🌸 Animal saliva and dander
- 🌸 Mold
- 🌸 Mold spores



Source:
Texas Sinus Center



Nothing to sneeze at







Allergens are things that can cause allergies and trigger asthma. Check with your doctor to find out if you have allergies and how you can best treat them.

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Clear The Inside Air

Is your home making you sick? Keeping your home safe begins with a look at the air you breathe. Indoor air pollution can come from:

-  Tobacco smoke
-  Wood Smoke
-  Gas-burning appliances and furnaces
-  Radon gas
-  Mold
-  Allergens

All of these air problems can be made worse by poor air circulation, and high heat and humidity. Here are some tips to help prevent health problems:

-  If you smoke, quit or smoke outside instead of in your home or car.
-  Make sure all of your appliances, furnaces and fireplaces are in good working order and vented correctly.
-  To stop mold, keep moisture under control. Use a de-humidifier or air conditioner to keep your house dry with a humidity level between 30 and 60 percent. You can test the humidity level with a hygrometer.
-  Clean up water leaks right away and get the leak fixed.

Source:
BCBS

Question & Answer



What types of plants produce the most allergy-causing pollen?

Answer: The type of pollen that most commonly causes allergy symptoms comes from plants that typically do not bear fruit or flowers. These plants produce small, light, dry pollen granules in large quantities that can be carried through the air for miles. Examples: weeds (ragweed, sagebrush), grasses, hardwood deciduous trees (oak, ash, elm, birch, maple, hickory, pecan, mountain cedar)

How can I tell if my child has allergies or a common cold?

Answer: Symptoms of allergies and colds can be similar, but here's how you can tell the difference. Both allergies and colds cause symptoms of sneezing, congestion, runny nose, watery eyes, fatigue, and headaches. However, colds often cause symptoms one at a time. Allergies cause the symptoms to occur all at once. Cold symptoms generally last from seven to 10 days, whereas allergy symptoms continue as long as a person is exposed to whatever the trigger is.

What does it mean when a product is labeled "hypoallergenic"?

Answer: This means the product is less likely to trigger an allergic reaction. Many products that we use every day, such as cleansers and soaps, deodorants, makeup, and even mouthwash, have ingredients that can irritate the skin or act as antigens. Many manufactures of cosmetics and cleaning supplies now market their products as hypoallergenic meaning the products do not contain ingredients that are known to cause irritation or allergic reactions.

Animal Allergies

Cats are the most common cause of pet allergies, but people can be allergic to many other animals and pets.

- 🐾 Dogs
- 🐾 Horses
- 🐾 Guinea pigs
- 🐾 Hamsters and gerbils
- 🐾 Birds
- 🐾 Rabbits

The most common cause of allergic reactions to animals are the enzymes in the animals' saliva and dander. There is no cure for these types of allergies, but reactions can be controlled with the use of medications and various over the counter products.

Bee and Wasp Allergies

Another form of animal allergy is caused by the venom produced by stinging and biting animals:

- 🐝 Wasp Stings
- 🐝 Bee Stings
- 🐍 Scorpion Stings
- 🐍 Snake Bites

Some people are severely allergic to wasp stings and bee stings. These people can go into shock, and possible even die, if they are stung. Fortunately most people do not react this severely, but bee and wasp stings can be very uncomfortable even if they don't require medical attention.



Source:
Texas Sinus Center

Healthy Recipe

French-style Spinach & Cheese Omelette

A healthy breakfast is the perfect opportunity to start your day off on the right track. This French-style omelet is fluffy and golden with the rich flavor of Parmesan cheese and sautéed spinach. Eggs provide protein and B vitamins and at only 80 calories each, they're an easy, healthy meal option. Make the recipe as is, or mix it up with leftover veggies.

Makes 1 Servings

Per serving: 278 calories, 21 g total fat (8 g saturated fat), 3 g carbohydrate, 18 g protein, 1 g dietary fiber, 341 mg sodium.



Ingredients:

- 🐾 2 cups of baby spinach, firmly packed
- 🐾 2 Tbsp. grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- 🐾 2 large eggs
- 🐾 1 Tbsp. cold water
- 🐾 1 Tsp. canola oil
- 🐾 1 tsp. unsalted butter
- 🐾 Freshly ground pepper
- 🐾 Canola cooking spray



Directions:

1. In dry, medium skillet over medium-high heat, cook spinach, stirring often until leaves collapse and spinach is tender, about 4 minutes. Cool spinach on plate, then squeeze out most of its moisture. Finely chop spinach and place in small bowl. Place cheese in another bowl.
2. Using fork, beat eggs, water and 3 or 4 grinds pepper just until egg yolks and whites are combined. Set aside.
3. Set omelette pan or skillet with 7-inch bottom over medium-high heat for 1 minute. Coat pan lightly with cooking spray. Add oil and butter, lifting and swirling pan to coat lower sides. When butter stops foaming, pour in eggs. Using flexible spatula, push edges of set egg toward center of pan so unset eggs flow out. When top of omelette still has some unset egg in center, slide pan off heat. Sprinkle on cheese. With handle toward you, arrange spinach across center of omelette.
4. Returning pan to heat with handle toward you, immediately use spatula to fold third of omelette near you over center. Lift, jerk sharply and tilt pan away from you so omelette slides forward. Using spatula, roll omelette over and slide it onto plate with seam side down. Serve immediately.

Move Of the Month:

Jumping Switch Kicks

Jumping switch kicks are a more challenging form of a beginner exercise. If you are new to exercising, omit the hop and just work on getting strong kicks. As you get stronger add the hops in.

-  Start with one leg up in the air.
-  Keep your abs tight and keep your arms up and by your chest as you hop from foot to foot while kicking the opposite leg in the air.



The fitter you are, the faster and higher your legs will go. Start slower and build speed as you go, and aim for 10-20 reps per side to start, eventually working up to 30 on each side.

Complete the puzzles and turn them to Human Resources by May 13, 2016 by 12:00 p.m. to be entered into a raffle for a \$10 gift card!

Puzzle

Congratulations to
last month's winner:
Mayra Rocha
Library



				9				4
4	1				3			
8		7	6		4	2	1	
		1			7			2
	6			4			9	
2			5			7		
	4	8	3		6	9		7
			4				2	1
6				1				

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|---|--|--|---|
|  Allergens |  Congestion |  Mold |  Seasonal |
|  Allergies |  Food |  Outdoors |  Sinusitis |
|  Allergy Attacks |  Histamine |  Pet Dander |  Sneezing |
|  Animals |  House Dust |  Plants |  Treatment |
|  Asthma |  Irritation |  Pollen |  Triggers |
|  Bee Sting |  Mites |  Runny Nose |  Watery Eyes |

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Next Month's Issue:

Summer Safety