

Allergies

An allergy occurs when the body reacts to a substance. This may cause a mild to severe problem. There are different kinds of allergies. The most common are:

- Airborne allergies such as pollen, mold, pet dander or dust
- Contact allergies such as metal, latex or chemicals
- Food allergies such as eggs, peanuts, nuts, milk, soy, wheat or shellfish
- Drug allergies

An allergy cannot be cured, but treatment can help you feel better.

Signs

People can have different signs from the same allergy. Any type of allergy can cause hives or skin rashes and wheezing or trouble breathing. Other signs can depend on the cause of the allergy.

- **Pollen, mold, pet dander or dust allergies**
 - Itchy, runny or stuffy nose
 - Sinus pressure
 - Sneezing
 - Itchy, red, swollen, burning or watery eyes
 - Itchy throat or cough
 - More mucus
 - Decreased taste or smell
 - Headache
- **Contact allergies**
 - Itchy, red, swollen, burning or watery eyes
 - Swelling
- **Food allergies**
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Abdominal pain or cramping
 - Diarrhea
 - Itchy, runny or stuffy nose
 - Itchy throat or cough

- Swelling around the mouth or trouble swallowing
- Fainting
- **Drug allergies**
 - Itching of the skin or eyes
 - Swelling of the lips, tongue or face
 - Fainting, dizziness or confusion
 - Rapid heart beat
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Abdominal pain or cramping
 - Diarrhea

Your Care

Avoid the substances that make your signs worse. Skin or blood tests may be done to check for allergies. You may need medicines to treat your allergies.

Call your doctor if you have:

- Sudden side effects from the medicine
- Signs that get worse or keep you from doing your normal activities
- A fever over 101 degrees F or 38 degrees C

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.