

Please note that these measures may not be enough to prevent allergy symptoms.

Be sure to always carry your child's asthma and allergy medication.

Take the time to talk to your child about his or her allergies, and how they impact asthma. Explain their cause and effect relationship so that your child better understands what you do to protect him or her. For example, if your child coughs after playing in a humid basement all day long, ask if he or she has noticed how playing downstairs often leads to coughing.

For more information, please call:

Centre d'Enseignement sur l'Asthme (CEA)
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514 345-4931 ext. 3900

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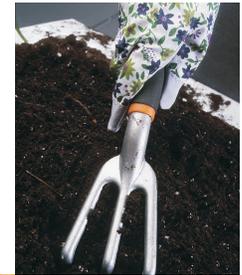
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This brochure will provide you with information about allergies and helpful tips for improving your child's health.



Allergies are the immune system's inappropriate and disproportionate response to one or many allergy-causing substances, better known as allergens.

Allergic reactions can occur in different ways:

- Allergic rhinitis (congestion, itchy and watery nose);
- Conjunctivitis (irritated, itchy and watery eyes);
- Skin reactions (rashes, puffiness, itchiness);
- Respiratory symptoms (coughing, difficulty breathing).

Identifying and avoiding allergens are recommended as a first step before starting or increasing any allergy medication. This is the basic approach to treating asthma and allergies.

If your child already suffers from one allergy, he or she is at risk of developing others. It is therefore preferable to take a preventive approach **as early as possible** to delay the onset of any new allergies. Be also mindful of cumulative situations. For example, asthma will be more difficult to control if your child, in addition to being allergic to mold, has a **cold** and is exposed to **cigarette smoke** in a home where the **level of humidity** is high.

INDOOR AND OUTDOOR MOLD

Mold is a microscopic type of fungus that can be found indoors and outdoors. There are thousands of mold species. They produce small particles (spores) that we inhale.

Indoors, mold multiplies in musty and damp areas where there is little air circulation. Mold is most often found in basements, bathrooms and kitchens. It can be easily recognized as the black or green stains around bathtubs, windows and walls. Plant soil is also an excellent medium in which mold can develop.

Outdoors, decomposing leaves and plants are an ideal medium where mold can grow.

Here are some tips for preventing or decreasing allergy symptoms related to mold:

- **Avoid using portable humidifiers**, particularly in your child's bedroom. If your central heating system is equipped with a humidifier, make sure it receives regular maintenance. Beware of forced-air heating ducts that are not cleaned on a regular basis. Follow maintenance instructions as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Air the house everyday.
- Keep track of the humidity level in your home.
 - Use a hygrometer to measure the humidity level in your home (available in large department or hardware stores);
 - Do not increase humidity if the level is between 35% and 45%;
 - Use a dehumidifier when the level exceeds 55%.

- Reduce the humidity level by making a few lifestyle adjustments.
 - Keep the bathroom door closed and turn on the ventilation system while and after taking a shower. If you do not have a ventilation system, open the window for a few minutes once your child is out of the bathroom.
 - Turn on the ventilation system of your range hood, or open the kitchen window when simmering food.
- Immediately repair any water leaks and water-damaged materials.
- Look for stains around the bathtub and windows. Scrub off the stains, using a brush and soapy water. Repair any damaged surfaces.
- If black mold appears on wall surfaces, this means that there is a more serious problem. The infested area must be removed and it is important to thoroughly check behind the wall. Find and repair any leakage or moisture, and replace all the old mold-infested materials with new ones.
- Do not paint over any mold-infested surfaces.
- Make sure that your clothes dryer is hooked up to an air exhaust outlet.
- Do not store firewood or lumber indoors.
- Limit the number of plants in your home.
 - Use watering trays to water your plants.
 - Change your plant's soil if you spot any mold (white dots).
 - Discard the plant or give it away if the problem persists.
 - Make sure your child avoids touching any plants as they contain mold particles.
- Remove fallen leaves from your property before they become too moist.
- Discourage your child from playing in dead leaves.