



Fall allergens irritate sufferers

by [Lisa Edge](#)

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Fall brings cooler temperatures and allergies. Doctors offices and pharmacies are seeing a rise in the number of patients seeking relief from symptoms like sneezing, runny noses, and itching.

Doctors say right now it's weed pollens, like ragweed, and mold spores that are a nuisance for those with allergies.

In the spring, pollen is hard to miss because everything turns yellow. Fall allergens are more discreet and often come out of nowhere.

"It always catches us by surprise when that ragweed or whatever is blooming. You can almost tell by the day by the people who walk in," says Willie Lee, pharmacist and owner of Lee's Apothecary in Murrells Inlet.

Experts say fall allergens are the result of a long summer, high humidity, and rain, a cocktail that makes our area rich in pollen. The notion that showers are good for those with allergies is a misconception.

"As soon as the rain is over, the pollen count can bounce back even higher, because the rain stimulates new growth. Now if you're allergic to mold, rain might increase mold growth," says Dr. Mark Schecker with Coastal Carolina Allergy.

Today there are a number of over-the-counter medications and plenty of prescriptions that bring relief. Experts say while allergies are a nuisance and can make your life uncomfortable, left untreated it can lead to serious health problems.

"Chronic infections of the sinuses or the ears or even asthma and those individuals should be evaluated by a specialist." says Dr. Schecker.

He also says even if you've never had allergies in the past, you could still develop them later in life. One way to tell if you're having an allergic reaction versus a cold - itching.

Experts say if you have allergies you should limit your time outside, and if you have pets, it's a good idea to wash them when they come back inside the home because they can bring in pollen.