

Adolescents with hay fever have higher rates of anxiety and depression, lower resistance to stress

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Although allergies affect more than 50 million Americans, they are occasionally misunderstood and can be seen as a minor condition. An article published in *Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology*, the scientific journal of the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) shows allergies can have serious, far-reaching consequences, especially on adolescent sufferers.

"The [emotional burden](#) of hay fever can be huge for adolescents" says allergist Michael Blaiss, MD, ACAAI Executive Medical Director and study lead author. "Three of the studies in our review examined how adolescents are emotionally affected by hay fever ([allergic rhinitis](#)) and hay fever with eye allergies (allergic rhinoconjunctivitis). They found adolescents with hay fever had higher rates of anxiety and depression, and a lower resistance to stress. The adolescents also exhibited more hostility, impulsivity and changed their minds often."

The article identified 25 studies that examined the effects of hay fever and hay fever with eye allergies in adolescents (10-17 years of age) and analyzed symptoms, impact on daily activities, emotional aspects, impact on sleep, educational burden and treatment burden.

"Our review highlights that allergy symptoms can be different in adolescents than in adults or children," says Dr. Blaiss. "Lack of sleep or [poor sleep](#) are both huge issues for adolescents, and it can be made

worse by the symptoms of hay fever with or without eye allergies. Poor sleep can have a negative impact on school attendance, performance and academic achievement."

The studies indicated that [hay fever](#) with or without eye allergies can negatively impact aspects of daily life that include driving and reading ability and can have a negative effect on psychological function. Adolescents may be particularly vulnerable because they may be embarrassed by their symptoms, may be learning to drive and are at a crucial point in their school career.

"Adolescents aren't 'big children' or 'small adults,'" says Dr. Blaiss. "They have very specific needs, and allergists can help relieve symptoms that can cause suffering. Adolescence is an important developmental period and controlling symptoms can help with [daily activities](#) such as homework and sports practices."

Provided by American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

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