

Is it COVID-19 or seasonal allergies?

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You suddenly develop the sniffles. Is it allergies or COVID-19?

One expert says whether you have a history of allergies might provide

your biggest clue.

"Symptoms such as congestion, [sore throat](#) and loss of smell are all common with both seasonal allergies and COVID-19," said Dr. Jonathan Matz, an allergist and immunologist with LifeBridge Health, in Maryland.

"We're not getting much concern from people who have seasonal allergies because their symptoms are predictable year to year," Matz said in a LifeBridge news release.

That means if your runny nose and sore throat consistently occur at this time of year, you likely have seasonal allergies, he noted.

Along with the predictability of symptoms, another sign of seasonal allergies is an itch in the throat or nose, which is not consistent with COVID-19 symptoms.

It's also important to know that fever is typically an indicator of COVID-19, but not of seasonal allergies.

If you've tried to assess your symptoms but remain unsure and don't feel well, it's best to get tested, Matz advised.

"If you're having these symptoms and you have never had allergies before, that is COVID until proven otherwise," he said.

Even if you've confirmed that you have seasonal allergies and not COVID-19, your symptoms may lead people around you to feel uncomfortable, which could lead to problems as schools, workplaces and other locations reopen.

"Where I am seeing concern is with students coming back to school in

person," Matz said. "Many school nurses and teachers are seeing kids with these symptoms and telling them to stay home, even when it is just allergies."

If you encounter concerns from other people, considering talking to an allergist and getting documentation that you have [seasonal allergies](#), Matz suggested.

More information: AARP has more on the differences between [seasonal allergies and COVID-19](#).

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