

Stay independent of allergies, asthma this July 4

July 3 2023, by Cara Murez



As outdoor gatherings begin for the Fourth of July holiday, a leading

asthma and allergy group is offering suggestions on how to avoid those seasonal symptoms.

"The Fourth of July is a great time to gather with friends and family and celebrate summer," said Dr. Kathleen May, president of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI). "But as with any outdoor holiday, July Fourth festivities mean those with allergies and asthma need to take a few extra precautions to make sure their holiday is safe, and sneeze- and wheeze-free.

"Those with asthma need to be cautious at events where smoke will be featured. Smoke in any form—from fireworks, bonfires or campfires—should be avoided as it can cause asthma to flare," she added in an ACAAI news release.

Among other tips are to avoid "wings and [stings](#)."

- If you've had a previous allergic reaction to a sting, always carry two doses of your [epinephrine](#) auto-injector, the ACAAI advises.
- Stay safe by wearing shoes when walking in grass where stinging insects may be looking for food. Cover soft drink cans and food because these bugs love open cans and containers.
- Your asthma may flare with temperature swings, such as going from a hot picnic area to a cold pool or an air-conditioned room.
- Consider instead doing an indoor workout on a hot, humid day that includes high levels of ozone.
- It's possible to get a meat [allergy](#) from the bite of a Lone Star tick, which is now found in most parts of the United States. If this has happened to you, then you may have developed an allergy to beef, lamb and pork, as well as sometimes to high-fat dairy products like [ice cream](#).
- While red meat tick allergy is uncommon, cases are rising. See an allergist if you suspect you have this allergy.

- Grass and pollen allergies are still around in the summertime. Take [allergy medications](#) well in advance of outdoor events, the ACAAI advises. Also be consistent with your quick-relief and long-term maintenance [asthma](#) medications.
- Sometimes people will experience tingling lips, a scratchy throat, itchy mouth or even swelling of lips or mouth after eating raw fruits and vegetables. This can be a sign of Pollen Food Allergy Syndrome (PFAS), which happens when allergens found in both pollen and raw/fresh fruits and veggies cross-react. These symptoms usually do not progress beyond the mouth.
- Check with your allergist to see if your PFAS symptoms might be a cross-reaction to pollen.
- Make an appointment to consult with an allergist if your allergies are keeping you from summer fun.

More information: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has more on [outdoor food safety](#).

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