

How to get hay fever relief from fall allergies

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Autumn is the season of change, with green leaves turning color and temperatures cooling. It's also the season of hay fever, or allergic rhinitis.

So how can people with fall allergies get relief? Dr. James Li, a Mayo

Clinic allergist has more in this Mayo Clinic Minute.

"Fall is a very common season for seasonal allergies to kick in," says Dr. Li.

And ragweed is usually the biggest culprit.

"If an allergic person with ragweed sensitivity goes outside, they inhale ragweed pollen grains—little pollen plant proteins—that land in the lining of the nose," says Dr. Li. "And in that allergic person, there is an [inflammatory response](#) or an allergic response that causes the swelling, the [runny nose](#) and the mucus production"—making life miserable for people with seasonal allergies.

"Nasal congestion, sneezing, runny nose, maybe itching of the nose or the mouth, as well as similar eye symptoms—eyes water, turn red or get itchy," says Dr. Li.

The first step in getting relief: Reduce your exposure by limiting time outdoors when pollen counts are high. Second: Try over-the-counter medications, like antihistamines, decongestants and allergy [nasal sprays](#), which can help control the symptoms. And if those don't help, make an appointment with a health care professional, like an allergist.

"We'll go through the allergy tests, and one of the treatments we will at least talk about would be allergy shots," says Dr. Li. "And the payoff is that their allergy symptoms can be significantly improved."

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