



**October 2011 is "Allergy Month"
at the State Employees' Insurance Board (SEIB)
Wellness Center and Pharmacy**

Is it a COLD or just ALLERGIES?

➤ Allergies affect about 8 to 16% of the population

	COLD or FLU	ALLERGIES
Cause	Caused by a virus; you can be contagious	Response to a trigger; not contagious
Fever	May have fever	No
Symptoms	Runny nose with yellow discharge, scratchy throat, aching muscles or joints, sneezing, and coughing	Runny nose with clear discharge, sneezing, coughing, and watery, itchy eyes.
Duration	A few days to a week, rarely more than 10 days	Could be seasonal or even year long
When	More likely to occur in the winter, but may occur in other seasons	Can appear at any time of the year, but usually occurs when plants bloom (spring or fall)
Treatment	Rest and fluids. A nasal decongestant or nasal spray can improve symptoms, but will not cure the flu or cold	Antihistamines and prescription medications can help with the symptoms, but cannot cure allergies

Your SEIB now provides both Tdap and flu vaccines for patients 18 years and older



Tdap vaccines are available at all times.

Flu vaccines are available NOW and available until our supply runs out

Wellness Center Hours:

M-W, Friday
8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Thursday
9:00 am to 5:00 pm

(334) 263-8470

Pharmacy Hours:

M-W, Friday
7:30 am to 5:30 pm
Thursday
9:00 am to 5:30 pm

(334) 263-8460

- o **Decongestants:** They relieve sinus congestion, but will not help alleviate sneezing or coughing
 - o Side effects: Increased heart rate, dizziness or lightheadedness, and restlessness
 - o Warning: **Avoid use if you have high blood pressure or heart, thyroid, or prostate problems unless instructed by your doctor**
 - o Pseudoephedrine – One 30 mg tablet every 6 hours as needed
100 tablets: **\$1.77** at SEIB pharmacy

Everyday Low Prices!

- o **ANTIHISTAMINES:** Will relieve runny nose, sneezing and itchy eyes
 - o Side effects: drowsiness, dizziness, and dry mouth, nose, and throat
 - o Diphenhydramine – One to two 25 mg tablets up to three times per day
100-count bottle: **\$1.67** at SEIB pharmacy
 - o Loratadine – One 10 mg tablet once a day
30 tablets: **\$1.53** at SEIB pharmacy
 - o Cetirizine – One 10 mg tablet once a day
90 tablets: **\$5.13** at SEIB pharmacy

Employees and dependents insured by the SEIB (BCBS Group 13000, 60913, 61013, 72013 and Southland Group 2000) can purchase various products at discounted prices at the SEIB Pharmacy.

NOTE: Only Group 13000 members may purchase **prescription** drugs.

The SEIB Pharmacy offers **FREE NEXT DAY*** delivery for your prescriptions! *Requests must be received by **3 pm**.

Your **insurance card** and a **photo ID** must be presented when purchasing all products and services.

Purchases of over-the-counter items are limited to: 1 box/1 bottle/30-day supply.

Visit the SEIB State Wellness Center & Pharmacy at 101 South Union Street, Montgomery, Alabama.

334-263-8460

rx@alseib.org

www.alseib.org

	Seasonal Allergies	Perennial Allergies
Other Names	'hay fever'	'intermittent' or 'persistent'
Occurrence	Predictable times ~ blooming seasons	year-round
Causes	Pollen: trees, grasses, weeds	Allergens: house dust mites, animal dander, molds

'Hay Fever' Symptoms:

- Sneezing, Coughing
 - Runny/Stuffy Nose
 - Drainage ('Post Nasal Drip')
 - Itchy nose, throat
 - Watery, itchy, swollen eyes
 - Dark under-eye circle
- Of note, if allergies are severe enough, they could cause an asthma attack!

Pollen and You

Pollen comes from weeds, grasses and trees, which all bloom at different times.

- The amount of pollen in the air is the highest in the early morning.
- Pollen moves around more freely on warm, dry days. This causes higher amounts of pollen to circulate outside.
- ❖ **Weeds** pollinate at the beginning of fall. The most common weed is "ragweed" which causes hay fever.
- ❖ **Trees**, including Birch, Cedar, Box, Elm, Hickory, Maple and Oak, pollinate in the late winter and into the spring.
- ❖ **Grasses** pollinate in the late spring and summer. Types that commonly cause reactions include Kentucky bluegrass, Timothy, Bermuda, and Rye.

How do I treat my Allergies?

Allergies are not curable, but by **avoiding allergens** that trigger your allergies, you can minimize your symptoms. **Antihistamines** are effective in relieving the symptoms you cannot avoid.

For outdoor allergies:

- ❖ Limit outdoor activity when the pollen or mold you are allergic to is released and when the "pollen count" is high.
 - Pollen.com is a resource that can help you track the pollen in your area.
- ❖ Use the 'recirculate' setting on your central air conditioning so that you aren't bringing in the pollen and mold from outside; replace AC filters often.

For indoor allergies:

- ❖ **Dust Mites:**
 - Keep surfaces clean to prevent build up.
 - Bare flooring is better than carpet for reducing dust mites, especially in bedrooms.
 - If you do have carpet, vacuum weekly.
 - Vacuuming expels dust into the air, so use a mask if needed.
 - Use mattress and pillow covers and wash bedding in hot water weekly to kill mites.
 - When dusting, use a damp or cleaner-treated cloth.
 - Lowering humidity indoors reduces dust mites, so keep doors and windows closed.
- ❖ **Animal Dander:**
 - If allergic, it is best to not have pets with fur or feathers in the house.
 - If you have pets, try keeping them out of your bedroom.
 - Bare flooring or low-pile carpet is preferred to keep animal dander at bay.
- ❖ **Reduce Mold Spores:**
 - Reduce moisture in bathroom and kitchen with dehumidifiers
 - Limit house plants
 - Fix leaks around house
 - Get rid of leave and weed piles around the yard
- ❖ **Cockroaches:**
 - Use boric acid and traps instead of chemical agents, as these can irritate rhinitis and asthma
 - Leave food and garbage covered

References:

1. Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
2. Lexi-Comp Internet Database
3. Pharmacotherapy, A Pathophysiologic Approach. DiPiro, et. al.