

What is Causing Your Allergy?

The first step in the management of allergic disease is identifying the allergen/s causing the problem. In some cases this may be obvious, whilst other cases may require medical evaluation using allergy tests. Once the allergen/s are identified, steps can be taken to reduce or avoid exposure.

Keeping a record of symptoms is important

Diagnosing an allergy requires medical expertise as the symptoms may be similar to other conditions. For example:

- Many people suffer from a repeated sore throat and runny nose which they think is a recurrent cold, when they may be suffering from allergic rhinitis (hay fever).
- Allergy may occur with other conditions such as asthma.
- Allergy symptoms can include an upset stomach and/or skin rashes.

Keeping a record of your symptoms is important to help identify the allergen to which you are allergic. The following information may be useful:

- Do your symptoms occur when you are inside the house, outside the house or both inside and outside?
- Do you suffer more at nighttime or during the day?
- Do you wake up with symptoms in the morning?
- Do you only get symptoms at certain times of the year?
- Does exposure to animals bring on your symptoms?
- Do you think that any food or drink brings on your symptoms?

Seek medical advice

If you think you have an allergy, visit your doctor or pharmacist for advice. They will want to know your clinical (medical) history of symptoms and exposure to possible allergens, so the more information you can give them the better.

Your doctor may perform or order allergen specific IgE tests to help confirm or exclude the cause of your allergy. They may also refer you to a clinical immunology/allergy specialist for further tests and treatment.

Effective prevention and treatment options for allergy are available

Aeroallergen minimisation and food allergen avoidance information is available on the ASCIA website.

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