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Wheezing, Sneezing? 10 Reasonzzz Why.

Posted By *Carleen Wild* On May 12, 2016 @ 5:27 AM In HealthZette | [Comments Disabled](#)

The weather is warming up, family and friends are asking to get together and celebrate being outside, and the garden is waiting to be planted. This can be one of the best times of the year.

Even those who don't suffer from allergies and asthma can suffer adverse health risks if mold is present.

The season, however, can also strike fear in the heartiest of souls (and chests and noses) — if they happen to be among the millions of seasonal allergy sufferers.

May is the official kickoff of springtime wheezing and sneezing — no wonder it's also National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month. While you can't control the outdoor environment, Robin Wilson, an ambassador for the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America and author of "Clean Design: Wellness for Your Lifestyle," says that by taking control of the inside of your home, you can greatly reduce or even eliminate asthma and allergy triggers.

"Most people know smoke is a trigger, but they're unaware of common things like mold, fumes from cleaning supplies, down pillows, pest control sprays, or smoke from improper cooking ventilation," Wilson said.

Here are common allergy triggers and Wilson's recommendations for controlling them.

1.) Tobacco smoke. Do not allow anyone to smoke in your home: Even second-hand smoke can cause swelling and mucus production in the airways of the lungs. If visitors must smoke, kick them outdoors.

2.) Pet Dander. Keep pets out of bedrooms and off upholstered furniture. Bathe pets at least once a week, and always wash your hands and launder clothing after playing with pets.

3.) Mold. Even those who don't suffer from allergies and asthma can suffer adverse health risks when mold is present. Lower your home's humidity to help mold from flourishing; ventilate well by using exhaust fans in the bathrooms, kitchen, and other damp areas; manage moisture in the basement; and monitor your home after a storm strikes.

4.) Pollen. More people are allergic to pollen than anything else. Do not dry your clothes on outdoor clotheslines. You should bathe before going to bed to rinse off pollen, place the clothes you wore in a covered laundry hamper outside your bedroom, wash your pillow covers frequently

— and remove shoes when you enter your home.

5.) Dust. Clean your home and wipe down surfaces frequently. Use an air purifier like the Honeywell True HEPA Air Purifier. The HEPA filter captures most microscopic airborne particles that pass through the filter, keeping the air as clean as possible.

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6.) Clothing. Chemicals in dry-cleaned clothing can contain perchloroethylene, which has been linked to cancer in animals and is believed to be a human carcinogen. If your dry-cleaned clothes hang in your closet for a while, they can release perc into the air.

7.) Cleaning supplies. Store household cleaning products away from children, in well-ventilated areas, and be sure containers are tightly closed to help prevent fumes from leaking out. Buy small containers and discard (in appropriate places) after using, rather than storing them for months or years.

8.) Vermin. Cockroaches, mice rats, and other vermin leave behind droppings that are major triggers of asthma and allergies. Keep your home free of crumbs, drips and other food waste, and repair holes in walls, cracks in floors, tears in window screens, and other entry points to your home.

9.) Odors. Although they seem harmless, scented products — soaps, shampoos, perfumes, lotions, deodorant, and even nail polish — can be a big trigger of allergies and asthma. Additionally, manage your use of air fresheners, avoiding plug-in fragrance boxes and scented candles.

10.) Wood smoke. Fireplaces can be beautiful. Unfortunately, using them to burn wood is not a great idea for allergy and asthma sufferers. Beautify your fireplace without fire. Choose a dramatic mantle and over-mantle décor like a large mirror, photograph, or painting.

If you are allergic to ragweed, you may not want to eat cantaloupe during the wheezing and sneezing season.

Of all the triggers mentioned, people are most unaware that vermin and pollen are the ones to watch for, said Wilson.

“Vermin have fibers that can trigger a reaction just by being in the vicinity of someone with an allergy, and the sprays are quite toxic and cause someone to trigger an asthmatic reaction. Second, pollen sticks to you, your hair, your clothing during the growing season — and in places where green blooms year-round, it can be especially challenging as your immune system is always on high-alert. You can also track it into your home,” she said.

Some fruits and vegetables also mimic allergens, she added. If you are allergic to ragweed, for

example, you may not want to eat cantaloupe during the “wheezing and sneezing” season.

Where asthma is concerned, there is no known cause. But when it develops, there can be serious consequences if it is undiagnosed or untreated — and it is a leading cause of emergency room visits for children and adults.

Wilson says get to an allergist, an ear, nose, and throat specialist, or possibly even a holistic practitioner if you’re suffering and can’t figure out why.

“Over-the-counter remedies do work for some people, but it is always best to visit a medical practitioner to see what is best for your body and lifestyle,” she said.

Article printed from LifeZette: <https://www.lifetzette.com>

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