



Specialty Medicine Compounding Pharmacy

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Competent Compounding

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Seasonal Allergies

As spring arrives, people with seasonal allergies experience a worsening of their symptoms. Seasonal allergies, also known as "hay fever," affects more than 35 million people in the US, so controlling them is a large issue for healthcare providers and their patients. Spring allergies are often triggered by pollens from trees, weeds, and grasses, and molds can trigger allergies both seasonally and year round. Trees generally pollinate beginning in February, followed by grasses in May and weeds in the late summer and early fall.

The most common symptoms of seasonal allergies are allergic rhinitis (hay fever) which manifests as runny nose, sneezing and cough, and allergic conjunctivitis (eye allergies) which can cause watery, itchy, and red eyes. Some people experience allergic asthma as well.

Your doctor/allergist can test you using skin testing or a blood test (RAST) to determine whether or not you have seasonal allergies and to which types of pollens. Depending on your symptoms, your doctor may prescribe an antihistamine, decongestant, and/or nasal spray. Several non-sedating antihistamines are available over the counter such as Claritin (loratadine) or Zyrtec (cetirizine), which won't cause drowsiness like medicines such as Benadryl (Diphenhydramine). Immunotherapy, aka "allergy shots," is another option for long-term allergy management and prevention. These help the immune system become more resistant to specific allergens through periodic injections over 3 to 5 years.

Some things you can do to help seasonal allergies include keeping windows closed to prevent pollen from entering, especially on windy days. Using air conditioning may help clean,

cool, and dry the air. Minimize early morning activity because pollen is usually the most prevalent between 5 and 10am. If you are allergic to mold, avoid growing too many indoor plants, as wet soil encourages mold growth. Also, you should machine dry bedding and clothing since pollen may collect in laundry if hung outside to dry. If your doctor prescribes medications, take them regularly. Do not take more medication than recommended, as this will increase your chances of side effects.

Veterinary Corner: Allergies in Pets

Allergies are not only common in humans, but in dogs and cats too. The hardest types of allergies to control in pets are inhalation allergies, which like in humans, are caused by dust mites, mold, mildew, trees, grass, and weed pollens. Dust mites that live in mattresses, upholstery, carpeting, and pet beds can also cause non-seasonal allergies. Animals may get allergy-related symptoms from flea bites as well.

Suspect possible allergies in your pets if they become itchy over their entire body, especially on their ears and feet. This may cause excessive scratching, hair loss, redness, or ear infections. It is very common to get secondary bacterial infections of the skin or in the ears due to self-inflicted lesions associated with scratching. If you see your pets chewing on their feet or rubbing their face on the carpet, especially as spring nears, there is a good possibility it may be allergy related. Pets may also cough, sneeze or wheeze, have a runny nose, or experience vomiting or diarrhea.

A veterinarian can test your pet through blood or skin testing, which can identify the things that trigger their symptoms. They may prescribe antihistamines, steroids, lotions, or



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topicals such as shampoos, rinses, and anti-itch solutions to help control their allergies. Topicals offer immediate but short-term relief. Shampoos or solutions may be hypoallergenic or contain colloidal oatmeal to soothe their skin or hydrocortisone to help decrease itching and swelling. Creams or salves are often made to rub on animals' feet and sprays are used on areas with less hair. Since pets may lick off these medications, it is recommended to get them involved in an activity after application to prevent them from licking until they are absorbed. Antihistamines are also prescribed by veterinarians, which are often the same formulations used in humans. These may cause some dry mouth or sedation, but they are shown to be highly effective in many dogs and cats for controlling their allergy symptoms. Animals may also receive desensitization injections if their allergies are severe.

Just as in humans, there are things you can do to help pets avoid allergy triggers, especially during the spring and summer months. These include keeping dogs out of fields, rinsing dogs after they play in high grass and weeds, and keeping pets indoors during the early morning hours and when the lawn is being mowed. You may also keep pets out of rooms shortly after vacuuming, wash their bedding in very hot water, and avoid large numbers of houseplants which may harbor mold.

Pardon Our Dust—We are Remodeling

Construction is well underway and it is going to get a little dusty. We are building a better pharmacy for you, our patients. A lot of exciting changes have already taken place and a lot more are on the way.

With South Lyon Pharmacy closing in February of this year, we picked up an additional 600 square feet directly behind the current

pharmacy. This may not seem like a lot until you realize that will increase our square footage by 1/3.

Most of the remodeling will take place out of site of the patients utilizing the pharmacy. However, there have been some changes that you can see already. In the front half of the store we will be removing all common entrances between the old pharmacy and the compounding lab. This is being done for security reasons. A new doctor office has already been added to the front of the building to accommodate our physician and give us a semi-private consultation area. New sinks as well as a new reverse osmosis water filtration system have also already been completed.

In the back of the building is where the real construction has already begun. Building codes are requiring us to put in a new heating and ventilation system as well as run new electrical to the entire current pharmacy. Those are expenses that are being absorbed by the landlord and we are truly thankful for that. A new rear door and window have already been put in and look great. The rear door that was installed will NOT be an entrance to the pharmacy. Rather, it will be an entrance to our new community room and lecture hall. We have been granted an occupancy rate of 50 people for seminars and lectures.

A larger storage room has already been framed in and is truly going to be a real asset. No more tripping over boxes!

Our office will also get a face lift and the staff will finally have a real break room. No more eating lunch in a corner of the store room.

The crown jewel of the remodel will be a brand new sterile lab. A custom modular room is being built for us by a company out of Grand Rapids. Stay tuned for the updates and the tour of the facility when it is completed!