



Dorfling-Smith Optometrists

Ocular Allergies

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With the seasons changing to Spring and Summer, more people struggle with ocular allergies.

According to a study in the Ophthalmology Times, 49.3% of people report allergy symptoms in Spring. The highest percentage of all the seasons! And a relatively low percentage (10% - 20%) of people actually seeks treatment from an eye-care professional.

Eye allergy symptoms include red, itchy and watery eyes with swollen eyelids, caused by irritants (allergens) such as dust, pollen, animal dander and mold.

It can also be associated with symptoms such as sneezing, congestion and a runny nose.

What can I do for relief?

1. Avoiding the allergen

If pollen is the trigger for your ocular allergies, stay inside if pollen counts are high or wear wrap around sunglasses outside.

2. Remove your contact lenses

Contact lenses can attract allergens. Try to wear them less often during allergy season or switch to daily disposable contact lenses.

3. Over the counter eye drops

These can bring some relief depending on the severity of your symptoms. Contact our practice for an appointment to assess your allergic conjunctivitis

and to suggest appropriate over the counter eye drops to help give relief.

4. Prescription medication

If ocular symptoms are severe, prescription drugs might be necessary to control your symptoms. These can include anti-histamines, mast-cell stabilizers, Decongestants, Non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAID) and steroids. These drugs can be prescribed by your GP.

5. Home Therapy

To relieve some of the itchiness and eyelid swelling, you can apply a cold compress on your eyes. For example a gel eye mask or even tea bags that you can put in the fridge to make it cold and then apply it to your closed eyes. The cold can relieve some of your immediate allergic symptoms like the itchiness and eyelid swelling.

Some of us are just more prone to allergies during Spring but it does not have to put a damper on your lifestyle. Visit our practice for an appointment, so we can help you manage them effectively.

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