

# ICS Spring Wellness Flyer



**"Ah-choo!"** Spring is in the air and so are seasonal allergies! If your child wakes up in the morning with sneezing fits, a runny nose, and itchy and watery eyes, these cold-like symptoms might be allergies. The weather is changing and seasonal allergies are at work all around us.

Seasonal allergies, sometimes called "hay fever" or seasonal allergic rhinitis, are allergy symptoms that occur during certain times of the year. Symptoms usually appear when outdoor molds release their spores. Grasses, weeds and trees also release tiny pollen particles into the air to fertilize other plants. The immune systems of people who are allergic to pollen or mold spores treat these tiny particles (called allergens) as invaders and release chemicals into the bloodstream to defend against them. It is the release of these chemicals that can cause allergy symptoms. Even kids who have never had seasonal allergies in years past can develop them. Seasonal allergies can start at almost any time, but usually develop by 10 years of age and reach their peak in the early twenties, with symptoms often lessening in adulthood. (<http://kidshealth.org>)

## *Signs and Symptoms*

If your child develops a "cold" at roughly the same time every year, seasonal allergies might be responsible for this. Allergy symptoms usually come on suddenly and will last as long as a person is exposed to a particular allergen. Your child might have:

- sneezing
- itchy nose and/or throat
- coughing
- clear, runny nose
- nasal congestion

These symptoms often come with itchy, watery, and/or red eyes, which is called allergic conjunctivitis.

However, there are other types of conjunctivitis (commonly referred to as **pinkeye**) that you should be aware of. Pinkeye can also be caused by many bacteria, viruses and environmental substances such as chlorine, smoke and fumes. Pinkeye can be worrying because it may make the eyes extremely red and can spread quickly, but it is a fairly common condition. If your child shows symptoms of pinkeye, you may want to see your healthcare provider to decide the course of treatment. Some kinds of pinkeye require treatment while others will clear on their own. (<http://kidshealth.org>)

Common symptoms:

- ❖ Discomfort in the eye
- ❖ Feeling like there's "sand" in the eye
- ❖ Redness of the eye and inner eyelid
- ❖ Discharge from the eyes, causing the eyelids to stick together when child awakens in the morning
- ❖ Swollen eyelids
- ❖ Sensitivity to bright light

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## *Sunscreen- FYI*

If you have time, this article talks about spray-on sunscreens. Although convenient, the spray option might not be the safest option to use on children.

<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/news/2011/07/don-t-spray-sunscreens-on-kids-at-least-for-now/index.htm>

