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## Allergy & Asthma News

September 2010

### **Ragweed Season**



We have reached that dreaded time of year again for many seasonal allergy sufferers: ragweed season. Because seasonal allergies affect such a large number of our patients, we want to remind you of a few helpful hints to manage your symptoms.

Ragweed is commonly found in fields, along roadsides, ditches, riverbanks and vacant lots; however, it can be found almost anywhere. During this time of year, ragweed is to blame for many allergy symptoms such as sneezing, runny noses and itchy and watery eyes.

Each ragweed plant can produce approximately 1 billion pollen grains in an average season. With the help of the wind, the grains can travel up to 400 miles. With these kinds of numbers, it becomes very difficult to avoid the wrath of ragweed. Following the suggestions below will help you survive ragweed season and keep your symptoms in check.

- ✓ Most importantly, take your allergy medications prior to exposure to allergens. This will help control your allergy symptoms.
- ✓ Don't forget your allergy injections. Immunotherapy is an effective treatment in up to 90% of patients who suffer from seasonal allergies.
- ✓ Keep windows closed and use air conditioning to prevent pollen from drifting into your home and car.
- ✓ Monitor pollen counts in your area. Pollen counts are typically highest from 5am to 9am. Stay indoors as much as possible during these peak hours.
- ✓ Change clothes after being outdoors and avoid drying laundry on a clothesline. This will help prevent the spread of pollen grains indoors.
- ✓ Avoid touching your face as much as possible. Always wash your hands after you have been outdoors to wash away any pollen grains that you may have picked up while outside.

For current pollen counts and office updates visit our website at [www.evansvilleallergy.com](http://www.evansvilleallergy.com)

### Upcoming Jasper Dates

September 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>  
October 26<sup>th</sup>

Our office will be closed  
**Monday, September 6<sup>th</sup>**  
for Labor Day

### **WELCOME MARTHA!**

Please help us welcome  
Martha to AACC. Martha  
joined our nursing staff last  
month and we are very excited  
to have her as the newest  
member of our team.

Allergy & Asthma  
Care Center will  
participate in the  
annual  
Race for the Cure on  
September 25<sup>th</sup>.

As we inch closer to converting to Electronic Medical Records, you will begin to see some changes in our office. We will make every effort to minimize the bumps along the way so as not to inconvenience our patients during our transition. We are looking forward to the many ways that EMR will improve the way we provide care to our patients.

### Oral Allergy Syndrome

Many individuals with ragweed allergy also experience symptoms when eating certain fresh fruits and vegetables. This is referred to as Oral Allergy Syndrome and can cause itchiness and swelling around the mouth.

Oral allergy syndrome occurs when the body confuses the proteins in certain foods with similar ones in ragweed. Common foods that trigger OAS include bananas, cucumbers, zucchinis, melons, chamomile, sunflower seeds and Echinacea. The body confuses these proteins and reacts by attacking them causing itching or hives in and around the mouth.

### **Foods to Watch Out For**

#### **Ragweed Allergy**

Melon  
Tomato  
Banana  
Zucchini  
Sunflower  
Dandelions  
Chamomile  
Echinacea

#### **Birch Pollen Allergy**

Kiwi  
Apple  
Pear  
Coriander  
Fennel  
Parsley  
Celery  
Cherry  
Carrots  
Almonds

#### **Grass Allergy**

Peach  
Celery  
Tomato  
Melon  
Orange

#### **Latex Allergy**

Banana  
Avocado  
Kiwi  
Chestnut  
Papaya