



# Health Notes



## Surgeons Choice Medical Center

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## Surgeons Choice Macomb Center

11012 E. Thirteen Mile Rd  
Warren, MI 48093  
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## Surgeons Choice Dearborn Center

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## Surgeons Choice Medical Clinic

Call for an appointment  
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## SEASONAL ALLERGIES: NIP THEM IN THE BUD



*Relieve seasonal allergies with these tried-and-true techniques.*

Spring means flower buds and blooming trees – and if you're one of the millions of people who have seasonal allergies, it also means sneezing, congestion, a runny nose and other bothersome symptoms. Seasonal allergies – also called hay fever and allergic rhinitis – can make you miserable. But before you settle for plastic flowers and artificial turf, try these simple strategies to keep seasonal allergies under control.

### Reduce Your Exposure To Allergy Triggers

To reduce your exposure to the things that trigger your allergy signs and symptoms (allergens):

- Stay indoors on dry, windy days. The best time to go outside is after a good rain, which helps clear pollen from the air.
- Avoid lawn mowing, weed pulling and other gardening chores that stir up allergens.
- Remove clothes you've worn outside and shower to rinse pollen from your skin and hair.
- Don't hang laundry outside – pollen can stick to sheets and towels.
- Wear a face mask if you do outside chores.

### Take Extra Steps When Pollen Counts Are High

Seasonal allergy signs and symptoms can flare up when there's a lot of pollen in the air. These steps can help you reduce your exposure:

- Check your local TV or radio station, your local newspaper, or the internet for pollen forecasts and current pollen levels.
- If high pollen counts are forecasted, start taking allergy medications before your symptoms start.
- Close doors and windows at night if possible or any other time when pollen counts are high.
- Avoid outdoor activity in the early morning when pollen counts are highest.

### Keep Indoor Air Clean

There's no miracle product that can eliminate all allergens from the air in your home, but these suggestions may help:

- Use air conditioning in your house and car.
- If you have forced air heating or air conditioning in your house, use high-efficiency filters and follow regular maintenance schedules.
- Keep indoor air dry with a

dehumidifier.

- Use a portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter in your bedroom.
- Clean floors often with a vacuum cleaner that has a HEPA filter.

### Try An Over-The-Counter Remedy

Several types of nonprescription medications can help ease allergy symptoms. They include:

- Oral antihistamines. Antihistamines can help relieve sneezing, itching, a stuffy or runny nose, and watery eyes.
- Corticosteroid nasal sprays. These medications improve nasal symptoms. Talk to your health care provider about long-term use of corticosteroid nasal sprays.
- Cromolyn sodium nasal spray. This nasal spray can ease allergy symptoms by blocking the release of immune system agents that cause symptoms. It works best if treatment is started before exposure to allergens. It's considered a very safe treatment, but it usually needs to be used 4 to 6 times daily.
- Oral decongestants. Oral decongestants such as pseudoephedrine (Sudafed) can provide temporary relief from nasal stuffiness. Some allergy medications combine an antihistamine with a decongestant. Talk to your health care provider about whether the use of a decongestant is good for treating your allergy symptoms.

### Rinse Your Sinuses

Rinsing your nasal passages with saline solution (nasal irrigation) is a quick, inexpensive and effective way to relieve nasal congestion. Rinsing directly flushes out mucus and allergens from your nose. Saline solutions can be purchased ready-made or as kits to add to water. If you use a kit or home-made saline solution, use bottled water to reduce the risk of infection.

Homemade solutions should have 1

quart (1 liter) of water, 1.5 teaspoons (7.5 milliliters) of canning salt and 1 teaspoon (5 milliliters) of baking soda. Rinse the irrigation device after each use with clean water and leave open to air-dry.

### Alternative Treatments

A number of natural remedies have been used to treat hay fever symptoms. Treatments that may improve symptoms include extracts of the shrub butterbur, spirulina (a type of dried algae) and other herbal remedies. Based on the limited number of well-designed clinical trials, there is not enough evidence to demonstrate the safety and effectiveness of these remedies.

Results of studies of acupuncture have shown possible limited benefit, but the results of studies have been mixed. Talk to your doctor before trying alternative treatments.

### When Home Remedies Aren't Enough

For many people, avoiding allergens and taking nonprescription medications is enough to ease symptoms. But if your seasonal allergies are still bothersome, don't give up. A number of other treatments are available.

If you have bad seasonal allergies, your health care provider may recommend that you have skin tests or blood tests to find out exactly what allergens trigger your symptoms. Testing can help determine what steps you need to take to avoid your specific triggers and identify which treatments are likely to work best for you.

For some people, allergy shots (allergen immunotherapy) can be a good option. Also known as desensitization, this treatment involves regular injections containing tiny amounts of the substances that cause your allergies. Over time, these injections reduce the immune system reaction that causes symptoms. For some allergies, treatment can be given as tablets under the tongue.

## 9 TIPS TO GET YOU SPRING READY!



As with January 1st, Spring can be a kick to get YOU motivated. It's a time of possibility, a time to take stock of the habits that might be holding YOU back from being who YOU want to be! Spring can also be a really good time to reevaluate the year and that includes giving your health and wellness routines a once over, You may even find that resolutions made in springtime are easier to follow than the ones you try to implement in the cold, bitter winter months. If you want to pay your health and well-being a little extra attention this Spring, but don't know where to start, here are nine tips to get you Spring Ready!

### Reset Your Sleep Schedule

Winter is a time for hibernating. Unless you've got somewhere to be, the grey overcast days and too-cold-to-go-out weather can make it tempting to stay in bed as long as possible. By springtime, a lot of us are sleeping a lot later than we need to and that can be a hard habit to kick.

As spring approaches, one of our best wellness tips is this: start waking up earlier. You'll have so much more time to get your day started. You'll also have more hours of daylight in general, freeing you up to read, exercise, relax with a cup of tea, and do whatever you please.

If you have trouble with this, try setting an alarm, gradually making it earlier a little at a time. If necessary, start going to bed earlier, too. Try relaxing tea or a hot bath to make this easier.

### Get More Steps In

Now that the weather is warming up, it's the perfect time to start walking more! Walking is the perfect low-impact exercise that boosts your cardiovascular health without leaving you sore and out of breath. Plus, it's easy to fit in more steps every day, such as choosing the stairs or walking to nearby errands rather than driving.

Once spring hits, the last thing you want to do is be out of shape and too tired to move around. Walking will help you lose excess weight and rev up your metabolism, helping you be the best version of yourself. Plus, it's a great way to relieve stress and get you in a great mood.

### Soak Up The Sun!

We had a VERY rainy winter this year with many cloudy days and it really affected my mood. Yes, I love the rain and I know that we need it but when it's sunny outside, I'm a different person.

Spring sunshine is just the best as it's not too warm and there are so many benefits you MUST take advantage of. Bright light exposure helps release serotonin in the body, which can boost your mood. It also helps the skin produce vitamin D, which is essential for bone health and other functions in the body!

### But Protect Your Skin and Eyes

Even though getting a certain amount of sunlight is healthy and beneficial, too much sun exposure can damage your eyes and skin. For this reason, it's important to use appropriate sun protection, which includes wearing sunglasses, protective clothing, and sunscreen.

The general rule of thumb is to cover up when you can and if you can't, wear your sunscreen. Sunscreen needs to be reapplied every couple of hours – especially if you're sweating or swimming.

### Eat Lots of Fresh Produce

Winter can sabotage your diet efforts, with all its unhealthy comfort foods, baking, and the holidays of course. While these taste good, especially on a cold winter's night, they can sure leave you feeling bloated and sluggish.

This spring, one of the best health tips to reverse the damage from

winter is this: fill your plate with lots of fresh, seasonal produce. Eating lots of raw fruits and vegetables can speed up the detoxification process, leaving you feeling refreshed, fueled, and energized. Plus, they're chock full of the vitamins and nutrients your body needs to be at its peak performance.

### Spring Clean Your Body

Spring cleaning is not just for your home. Giving your body a break from the toxins that are everywhere is also important. If you are struggling to lose weight or just not feeling your very best... it is not your fault. The food industry has hijacked your taste buds, your hormones and your metabolism with addictive processed foods. The SECRET to looking and feeling great this spring is to give your body a break from these things and reclaim your health, even if just for a week.

### Stay Hydrated!

I know this is not new news to you! Every health coach says it. I think it's one of the top pillars of a healthy body but why is it so difficult to drink enough water? Spring is a great time to reevaluate your healthy habits and drinking enough water is one of them.

### Clear the Clutter

Surrounding yourself with clutter and mess can wreak havoc on your health. A 2010 study found that people who described their living spaces as disorganized tended to have generally higher levels of stress hormone cortisol. Meanwhile, those who characterized their homes as being restful and restorative were not only less stressed than their cluttered counterparts but also reported less sad feelings as the day went on.

### Find Your Perfect Exercise Program

One of the best wellness tips to keep in mind is this: find your favorite way to stay moving. Exercise benefits our bodies in so many ways, and spring is the perfect time to kick-start a new fitness routine.

The trick here is to find something you enjoy doing. This will help you stick with it and start achieving your fitness goals before you know it!

On top of that, exercise also does wonders for your mood. If you've been stuck in the winter doldrums (as many of us have been), you can instantly create feel-good endorphins by adding some physical activity to your day.



## IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

HAPPY

Spring



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