

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE SEASONAL ALLERGIES OR CORONAVIRUS?

Unfortunately, some symptoms of allergies and coronavirus (COVID-19) do overlap. While many symptoms - such as a runny nose - are different, hayfever can also prompt a cough that can alarm both sufferers and those around them.

During spring or fall allergy seasons, it may be even harder to differentiate between allergies and the COVID-19 illness. Fortunately, there are several key symptoms that can help you tell the difference between allergies and coronavirus:

- Allergy symptoms **DO NOT** typically include fever, sore throat, nausea, or achiness, which have been reported in individuals infected with coronavirus.
- Allergy symptoms **DO** typically include itchiness (itchy eyes, itchy ears, itchy nose, itchy throat), which are not typical signs of coronavirus infection

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) VS HAYFEVER. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE

TYPICAL SYMPTOMS	CORONAVIRUS <i>(symptoms range from mild to severe)</i>	HAYFEVER <i>(spring/fall allergies)</i>
Fever (>100.4° F)	Common	No
Cough	Common (usually dry & continuous)	Sometimes (usually dry)
Shortness of breath	Common	Not usually*
Headache	Occasional	Occasional
Sore throat	Occasional	Common “itchy” throat
Runny or stuffy nose	Infrequent	Common
Sneezing	No	Common
Aches and pains	Occasional-sometimes severe	No
Fatigue	Common - comes on quickly	No
Diarrhea	Infrequent	Common
Itchy, watery eyes	Infrequent	Common
Nausea or vomiting	Occasional	Rare
New loss of taste or smell	Occasional	Rare

**May trigger asthma symptoms
including shortness of breath*

In some people, hay fever can trigger allergic asthma, causing a tight chest and difficulty breathing. If an individual has hay fever and asthma, they may also experience a tight feeling in their chest and shortness of breath, in addition to wheezing and coughing.

If you are sneezing but do not have fever, achiness, or sore throat, it is more likely that you are experiencing allergy symptoms. Allergy-induced sneezes will often occur in rapid, uncontrollable bouts.

People with coronavirus appear to have more infrequent sneezes, which are accompanied by other symptoms.

Is it possible to have both seasonal allergies and Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Yes. People with seasonal allergies are not immune to coronavirus. **If you typically have allergy symptoms in spring/fall**, pay close attention to their type and severity - do you feel differently than in prior allergy seasons? Do you have a fever, aches, or a sore throat? Does your cough or sneeze feel different than it usually does? Have you noticed that your allergy medicines are not helping reduce or relieve your symptoms? It's important to stay vigilant about what your body is telling you.

References:

Allergy Symptoms vs. Coronavirus (COVID-19) <https://www.webmd.com/lung/covid-allergies>

What are the differences and similarities between allergies and COVID-19?
https://www.medicinenet.com/covid-19_vs_allergies/article.htm