

NEWSLETTER

Sussex County Division of Health



Welcome to
the health
hub!

UNDERSTANDING Environmental Allergies

What are environmental allergies?

Environmental allergies occur when your immune system reacts too strongly to substances in your surroundings. These substances, known as allergens, are typically harmless, but for someone who is allergic, the body mistakenly identifies them as a threat and overreacts when exposed.

How do environmental allergies affect the body?

Environmental allergies occur when your body reacts to allergens in your surroundings.

Symptoms may include:

- Nasal congestion
- Sneezing
- Headache or fatigue
- Postnasal drip
- Itchy or runny nose
- Hives
- Coughing
- Red, watery eyes
- Wheezing or trouble breathing

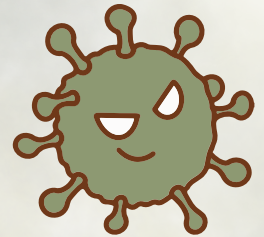
What are environmental allergens?

Environmental allergens are substances around you that can trigger reactions, including:

- **Pollen:** Dust from trees, grass, and weeds, common in warm, windy weather.
- **Mold:** Fungi that grow in damp indoor areas and outdoors in humid conditions.
- **Pet dander:** Proteins from an animal's skin, fur, feathers, and saliva.
- **Dust mites:** Tiny organisms in bedding and carpets, reactions come from their waste and body particles.
- **Cockroaches:** Allergies caused by proteins in their droppings and body parts.

How to prevent environmental allergies at home:

- ✓ Keep windows closed and use air conditioning to limit pollen.
- ✓ Keep indoor humidity below 50% to prevent mold and dust mites.
- ✓ Clean damp areas often and avoid mold-prone spaces.
- ✓ Bathe and brush pets regularly, and keep them out of bedrooms.
- ✓ Wash bedding weekly in hot water and use dust-mite-proof covers.
- ✓ Vacuum carpets and rugs frequently or choose hard flooring when possible.
- ✓ Avoid smoking or burning scented products indoors.





STAY ALERT ON:



POISON PREVENTION

More than 90% of the time, poisonings happen inside homes.

Follow these prevention tips in your home!

Household Products

- Cleaners and disinfectants can be harmful if not used properly.
- Never mix bleach with anything except water.
- Keep products in original containers and out of children's reach.
- Do not store chemicals in food or drink containers.
- Avoid using cleaners or bleach on food, hands, or skin unless directed.



Food

- Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water.
- Do not wash meat, poultry, or eggs.
- Never use cleaning products on food or packaging.
- Wash hands and surfaces before and after preparing food.
- Keep refrigerated foods below 40°F (5°C).



Medicine

- Keep medicines and harmful substances locked up and out of children's reach.
- Store medications in their original labeled containers.
- Do not share prescriptions.
- Check with a healthcare provider, pharmacist, or call 1-800-222-1222 about possible drug interactions.



Environmental

Be aware of the main types of environmental poisoning

Lead: a highly toxic metal that can cause serious health problems when paint chips or lead dust are ingested or inhaled.

Carbon monoxide: colorless, odorless, deadly gas produced by fuel-burning appliances

Pesticides: chemicals used to control insects and rodents, but they can be harmful to people and pets if not handled, used, or stored properly.





March is: **COLORECTAL CANCER** Awareness

What Is Colorectal Cancer?

Colorectal cancer is cancer that starts in the colon or rectum. It often begins as small growths called polyps that can become cancer over time. Early detection through screening can prevent cancer or find it when it is highly treatable.

Why it Matters

- It is the 3rd most common cancer in men and women
- It is the 2nd leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the U.S.
- Often develops without symptoms in early stages
- Screening can prevent it



Know the Risk Factors

- Age 45 or older
- Family history of colorectal cancer
- Personal history of polyps or inflammatory bowel disease
- Diet high in red/processed meats
- Physical inactivity or smoking/alcohol use

Reduce Your Risk of Colorectal Cancer



Get Screened



Avoid Alcohol



Eat a Healthy Diet



Avoid Smoking

March is

NATIONAL NUTRITION Month



National Nutrition Month is a time to focus on making informed food choices and building healthy eating habits. Here's how to organize your plate to include a balance of fruits, vegetables, grains, and protein for better overall health.

1/2 PLATE FRUITS & VEGGIES

Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables at every meal. They're rich in fiber to support healthy digestion and provide essential vitamins and minerals that help keep your body energized. Eating a variety of colorful options ensures you get a wide range of nutrients. Fresh, frozen, or canned options can be a healthy choice when included in your daily meals.



1/4 PLATE PROTEIN SOURCES

Choose a variety of lean protein sources such as poultry, lean meats, fish, eggs, beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, and soy products. Protein should make up about one-quarter of your plate—roughly 4–6 ounces of meat or fish for adults. It helps keep you satisfied and supports muscle growth and repair.



1/4 PLATE WHOLE GRAINS

Grains should make up one-quarter of your plate, and at least half of those choices should be whole grains. Whole wheat bread, brown rice, corn, and oatmeal are great examples. Whole grains provide more fiber, which helps you feel full longer and supports healthy digestion. About ½ cup of cooked grains is an appropriate portion for an adult meal side.



SPRING HEALTH

CHECKLIST

Spring is the perfect time to refresh your home and protect your family's health. Use this checklist to reduce hazards indoors and outdoors.

Indoor Health Tips

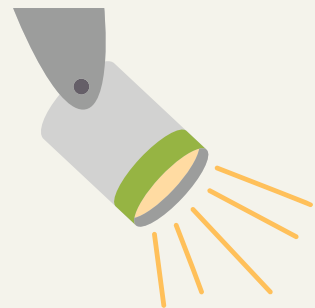
- ☐ Replace Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning filters
- ☐ Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- ☐ Check for leaks or signs of mold
- ☐ Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces
- ☐ Safely dispose of expired medications

Outdoor Health Tips

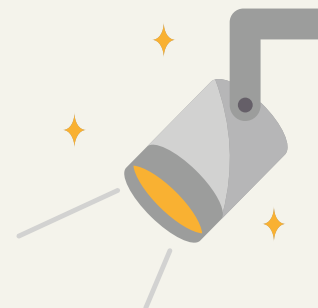
- ☐ Remove standing water to prevent mosquitoes
- ☐ Clean gutters and ensure proper drainage
- ☐ Inspect playgrounds and outdoor equipment
- ☐ Secure trash to warn off pests

Personal Health Checklist

- ☐ Stay up to date on medical checkups and screenings
- ☐ Maintain a balanced diet and stay hydrated
- ☐ Exercise regularly and get fresh air
- ☐ Practice good hygiene, including handwashing
- ☐ Wear sunscreen and protect against sun exposure



SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH



SUSSEX COUNTY MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

The Sussex County Board of County Commissioners created the Sussex County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) to bring together health professionals and community members who want to support public health and emergency preparedness efforts.

The MRC plays a vital role in strengthening our county's ability to respond to public health needs and large-scale emergencies. It is part of Citizen Corps, a national initiative supported by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to engage communities in all-hazards preparedness and resilience.

What Does the MRC Do?

- ✓ Supplements existing emergency and public health resources
- ✓ Organizes community volunteers to prepare for and respond to emergencies
- ✓ Supports disease prevention and injury reduction efforts
- ✓ Strengthens local emergency response capabilities



Who Can Volunteer?

Medical & Health Professionals

- Physicians
- Nurses
- Pharmacists
- Mental health professionals
- Paramedics
- Medical assistants
- Retired or active healthcare providers

Non-Health Professionals

- Administrative & clerical support
- Reception & phone assistance
- Translation services
- Event & outreach support
- Anyone with an interest in health and emergency preparedness

Training and Support

All MRC volunteers receive training to assist Sussex County public health professionals in preventing and minimizing disease and injuries in our community.

**Be prepared. Be involved.
Be part of the solution.**



Scan the QR Code to Join!