



Allergy Facts and Figures

An [allergy](#) occurs when the body's immune system sees a substance as harmful and overreacts to it. The reactions can range from mild to severe and can cause a medical emergency.

Allergies, asthma, and several other inflammatory conditions are related: eczema (atopic dermatitis), contact dermatitis, nasal polyps, chronic hives, and various types of food allergies.

Understanding allergic conditions is crucial for effective advocacy and support. By raising awareness and promoting education, we can empower communities to act now to support and improve the health of millions.

What Is an Allergy?

An [allergy](#) is when the immune system reacts to a foreign substance, called an allergen. This reaction causes specific clinical symptoms. The allergen could be something you eat, inhale into your lungs, inject into your body, or touch.

- An allergic reaction can cause coughing, sneezing, hives, rashes, itchy eyes, a runny nose, swelling, and a scratchy throat. In severe cases, it can cause low blood pressure, breathing trouble, asthma attacks, and even death if not treated promptly and appropriately.
- There is no cure for allergies. You can manage allergies with exposure control, prevention, and medical treatment.

What Are Allergic Diseases?

Allergic diseases are a set of conditions that happen when an allergen triggers an immune response in the body (called hypersensitivity). The immune response triggers symptoms that can range from mild to severe. Some of these symptoms can cause long-term damage to the body. Many of these conditions are driven by the same inflammation process.

List of allergic conditions include:

- Allergic asthma
- Allergic rhinitis and rhinosinusitis
- Allergic conjunctivitis
- Allergic bronchopulmonary aspergillosis (ABPA)



- Allergies (food, medicine, pollen, animal matter, insect stings and bites, mold, latex, and other substances)
- Anaphylaxis
- Atopic dermatitis (eczema)
- Cell-mediated food allergies: eosinophilic esophagitis, food protein induced enterocolitis syndrome
- Chronic hives (urticaria)
- Chronic sinusitis
- Contact dermatitis
- Hypereosinophilic (hy-per-ee-o-SIN-o-phil-ik) syndrome
- Hypersensitivity pneumonitis
- Mast cell activation syndrome
- Nasal polyps
- Occupational asthma or allergy (caused by substances in the workplace)
- Systemic mastocytosis

How Common Are Allergies?

Allergies are among the most common, but overlooked, diseases in the United States.

- More than 106 million people in the U.S. experience various types of allergies each year. This equals about 31 out of 100 (or 1 out of 3) people in the United States. Common examples include seasonal allergies, eczema, and food allergies.^{1,2}
- Nearly 32 out of 100 U.S. adults and 30 out of 100 U.S. children have a seasonal allergy, eczema, or food allergy.^{1,2}

How Many People Seek Medical Care for Allergies?

- Allergic conditions are one of the most common health issues affecting children in the U.S.³
- On average, it is estimated that anaphylaxis (a severe allergic reaction) results in 45,000–50,000 emergency room visits in the United States each year.⁴
 - From 2008 to 2016, emergency room visits for anaphylaxis more than doubled.⁴

Do People Die from Allergies?

- While the rates of allergies are steadily rising, the overwhelming majority of allergy emergencies do not result in death. It is rare to die from an allergic reaction – the



probability is very low. Estimates of allergy-related deaths in the U.S. are around 200–500 people per year.⁵

- The most common triggers for serious allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) are medicines, food, and insect stings.⁶ Medicines cause most allergy-related deaths.⁷
- Of people who die from allergic reactions, most are older adults (over age 65) due to allergic reactions to medicines.⁷

What Are the Costs of Allergies?

- The cost of [nasal allergies](#) is between \$3 billion and \$4 billion each year.⁸
- A 2025 study estimates that food allergies may cost the United States nearly \$371 billion per year.⁹

How Common Are Seasonal Allergies?

- In 2024, more than 82 million people in the U.S. were diagnosed with [seasonal allergic rhinitis \(seasonal allergies\)](#). This equals:
 - Around 67 million adults, which is 25 out of 100 adults, and
 - Around 14 million children, which is 21 out of 100 children.^{1,2}
- Seasonal allergic rhinitis is an allergic reaction to pollen from trees, grasses, and weeds. This type of rhinitis occurs mainly when pollen from trees (spring), grasses (summer), and weeds (fall) are in the air. People with certain mold allergies may also have seasonal allergies when mold counts increase during wet seasons.
- In 2024, non-Hispanic Black adults and non-Hispanic White adults were more likely to have a seasonal allergy than Hispanic and non-Hispanic Asian adults.¹

How Common Are Food Allergies?

- As of 2024, nearly 22 million people have [food allergies](#) in the U.S. This equals about 6 out of 100 people.^{1,2}
 - About 18 million (7 out of 100) U.S. adults have food allergies.¹
 - About 4 million (5 out of 100) U.S. children have food allergies.²
- In 2024, 10 out of 100 non-Hispanic Black adults had food allergies, compared to 6 out of 100 non-Hispanic White adults.¹
 - Food allergy has increased among U.S. children over the past 20 years, with the greatest increase in Black children.¹⁰
- Nine foods cause most food allergy reactions. They are milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, wheat, soy, and sesame.
- Milk is the most common food allergen for children, followed by egg and peanut.¹¹
- Shellfish is the most common food allergen for adults, followed by peanut and tree nut.¹¹



How Common Are Drug Allergies?

- For every 100 adverse reactions to drugs, between 5 to 10 are from allergic reactions.¹²
- For every 100 hospital admissions in the United States, between 3 to 6 are caused by adverse drug reactions.¹³
- The most commonly reported [drug allergy](#) is to penicillin, with up to 10 out of 100 people saying they are allergic to this type of drug. However, less than 10 out of 100 of these people (or less than 1 out of 100 of the total population) are actually allergic to penicillin drugs when evaluated for these allergies.¹⁴

How Common Is Latex Allergy?

- About 4 out of 100 people have a [latex allergy](#).¹⁵
- Latex allergy is more common in certain occupations, especially with frequent use and exposure to powdered latex gloves (such as health care and dental workers). Approximately 10 out of 100 health care workers have a latex allergy.¹⁵

How Common Is Insect Allergy?

[Insect stings, bites or “debris”](#) can trigger an allergic reaction in people.

- Insect sting allergies affect about 3 out of 100 people in the U.S.¹⁶
 - The most common stinging insects that cause allergic reactions are bees, wasps, hornets, yellow jackets, and fire ants.
 - In the United States between 2011 – 2021, there were a total of 788 deaths from hornet, wasp, and bee stings with an average of 72 deaths per year. Overall, 84 out of every 100 of these deaths occurred among males.¹⁷
- Dust mite allergy affects 20 million people in the U.S.¹⁸
 - Cockroaches and dust mites may also cause nasal or skin allergy symptoms. They may be the most common cause of year-round allergic asthma.

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