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# Don't 'Fall' for Fall Allergies

Simple Tips To Help Reduce Common Fall Allergens

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** – **September 24, 2010** – For some, brightly colored leaves are a signal that fall is here, but for those sensitive to allergens, there's a clearer sign that autumn has arrived: allergy symptoms.

According to the National University of Health Sciences, ragweed is one of the top triggers of hay fever symptoms in the United States and often gives millions of people runny noses and watery eyes<sup>1</sup>. Additional allergens flourish in the fall:

- Trees and grasses that pollinate in autumn, such as elms
- Mold growing in moist soil, vegetation, fallen leaves and gutters

Here are some tips to help reduce fall allergens from getting out of hand:

- Change your air filter. Fall is when some homeowners turn their furnace on after months of it sitting idle. While it isn't in use, heating and cooling systems can accumulate dust and other particles. Before you turn on your HVAC system, install a new filter, to keep that accumulated dust from kicking back into your air. And use a Filtrete filter to help capture allergens like mold spores, pollen and dust, from the air passing through it.
- Wear a mask for outdoor chores. Pollen and mold spores can accumulate in fallen leaves and damp grass<sup>1</sup>. When raking or mowing, wear a face mask. Consider reducing your outdoor activities on dry and windy days when airborne allergens could be at their peak.
- After a day outdoors, hit the showers. Pollen can sometimes accumulate on your skin, hair and clothing. If you spend more than an hour or so outdoors, showering and changing clothes may help reduce allergens.
- **Do a garden cleanup.** To help reduce mold spores that may enter your home, remove any leaves, clippings and compost from around the edges of your property. Removing tree branches and brush hanging closest to windows and doors may also help. If you want to repot indoor plants before fall weather arrives, do the dirty work outside.
- **Keep windows and doors closed.** You may want to air out your house as the hot summer air cools. For many people with sensitivities to airborne particles, Fall breezes may cause sneezes. Keeping windows and doors shut may help.

If all else fails, wait for the first frost. In markets with cooler climates, frost can freeze out one of fall's worst allergens—ragweed—for the season<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> National University of Health Sciences: http://www.nuhs.edu/show.asp?durki=369

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