

The Allergy & Asthma Clinic

www.TheAllergyClinic.com

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One study featured in the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology noted that “warmer temperature can alter seasonality of pollen as well as pollen concentration, and may impact allergic diseases such as hay fever. Recent studies suggest that extreme heat events will likely increase in frequency, intensity, and duration in coming decades in response to changing climate”. The study concluded that “exposure to extreme heat events is associated with increased prevalence of hay fever among US adults”.

Below are some tips to help you deal with the rising heat and hopefully, reduce the chance of your allergies and asthma from flaring.

- Run an air conditioner or fans whenever possible.
- Take a cool shower or bath to help cool off.
- Minimize direct exposure to the sun. If you must go outside, make sure that you wear sunscreen and whenever possible, stay in the shade.
- Take your walks earlier in the morning, when the weather tends to be a little cooler.
- Wear loose-fitting, light-colored clothing. Note that cotton is a much more breathable fabric as compared to synthetic fibers.
- Stay hydrated, preferably with beverages that do not contain sugars, alcohol or caffeine.
- Check the local news for health and safety updates.
- Check the weather where you plan to vacation, pack accordingly and make plans to adjust your activities if the weather is extreme.

If there has been a lapse in your allergy treatment because of summer travels, please call our office and speak with one of our clinical staff to help you get you back on track.

ALLERGIES, HEAT and HUMIDITY

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s forecast for summer calls for “a whole lot of heat without much rain to provide relief”. Many of us have noticed that so far, this year has proven to be a much warmer year as compared to previous years. It has been predicted that most of the United States is expected to have higher than normal temperatures, especially during the months of June through August. It is not a surprise that the warmer weather and the below average rainfall will further worsen the drought, affecting most of the western states. To make matters worse, air pollution is worse on hot summer days. Heat waves are occurring more frequently, are more severe and are lasting for longer periods of time. For the patient with allergies and asthma, exposure to higher temperatures, as well as humidity, can make them feel worse. Unfortunately, climate change is again party to blame.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, extreme heat conditions are defined as weather that is much hotter or more humid than the average for a particular time and region. The heat index is a measure of how hot it feels when relative humidity is factored in with the actual air temperature.

Humidity is an important factor in how hot it feels because when humidity is high, water doesn’t evaporate as easily, making it harder for us to sweat.