

Timely intervention for allergic cough is the need of the hour

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Continuous coughing can be annoying and may rob your peace. Moreover, if you are suffering from an allergic cough then it is essential to consult your expert immediately and get it sorted at the right time. Here, we tell you what is allergic cough, its symptoms and how to deal with it.

A cough is a common reflex action which clears the throat of mucus or foreign irritants. Do you know that coughing to clear one's throat is typically an infrequent action, though a number of issues can lead to more frequent bouts of coughing? Furthermore, most episodes of cough will clear up or may improve within two weeks. But if you wake up suddenly in the middle of the night owing to that constant cough which is disturbing your sleep? Or skip your important meeting, due to continuous and loud coughing? Then, Beware! Moreover, if you feel that it could be an allergic cough? Then, it is time to take charge of your health and tackle it. We brief you about the symptoms which you should watch out for and list out treatments to manage it. Don't dare to ignore these symptoms, as it can take a toll on you.

What is an allergic cough?

Allergic cough can give you a tough time. It is a term which can be used to distinguish cough caused by allergies from cough which one may get owing to the common cold. You will notice that the cough may be usually accompanied by a runny nose and nasal congestion, and one may notice them when one is suffering from a common cold or allergic reaction. Sometimes, it may be difficult to diagnose and tackle it as the causes can be uncertain. Moreover, many people having allergic cough also end up taking the wrong medications and fail to get treatment at the right time.

The causes:

Allergic cough can be primarily caused owing to an overactive immune system responding excessively to certain substances which your body becomes exposed to. This takes place when your body mistakes those harmless substances for the harmful ones, and thus initiates a defense system to fight them off. This may also lead the release of the chemical called histamine, which one's body releases when a patient is suffering from a cold. Histamine is responsible for runny noses, coughing,

sneezing, and swelling of the nasal passages. Hence, the patient tends to experience cold-like symptoms even when he is not suffering from the common cold. This is the time when an allergic cough comes in the picture. There is no specific cause behind it but some may be more susceptible when compared to others. People with a family history of allergies may be at a greater risk of getting it. Various studies also suggest that children with one allergic parent have more chances of developing allergies. Also, allergic cough can be influenced by external factors. An extreme pollen season or moving into a new moldy environment may lead to flare-ups. So, see to it that you note the triggers and avoid them. Not only this, even pollen, fungi, dust, air pollution, and passive smoking can also be blamed for it. You may also be prone to it if you are suffering from hay fever, upper airway cough syndrome and Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD). Allergic cough can also be accompanied by sinus and middle ear infections too.

The symptoms:

One may exhibit symptoms like dry cough or cough which is accompanied by mucus and may manifest in certain settings like during pollen-heavy season or in the presence of animals. Moreover, continuous sneezing, congestion of nose and throat, fatigue, and itchy and watery eyes, are few other symptoms which one may experience.

How to treat it?

You will have to visit your doctor who will examine the underlying cause behind your allergic cough and then suggest a proper treatment. The treatment may vary from person to person. Your doctor will help you tackle it with the help of medications. You should also see to it that you avoid taking over-the-counter medications or self-medicate. Doing so can worsen your condition.

Here are few strategies which will help you keep an allergic cough at bay.

- You should make sure that you avoid allergens or irritants which your body is sensitive to; the most common allergens are pollen, mold, animal dander, and dust mites, which should be dealt with.
- Opting for antihistamines prescribed by your doctor may help inhibit the release of histamines and this will allow you to relieve the symptoms like stuffy nose, runny nose, and swollen nasal passages.
- You can also take decongestants suggested by your doctor, which can help you get rid of your stuffy and runny nose.
- You can also cover your face while stepping out in order to avoid dust and pollens.
- You will be able to tackle it with the help of a skin or blood test as well. This may help you identify your allergy. For some, a lung-function test, chest x-ray or bronchoscopy may be needed to identify the causes behind that persistent cough.
- One should also be alert about the factors causing allergies. Your doctor may also give you anti-allergy medicines.
- You can also wear a mask, before going out. Or, avoid visiting places which are dusty and unclean.
- You should also keep your surroundings clean and avoid dust as much as possible.
- Regular follow-ups and check-ups with your doctor can also be helpful.

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