

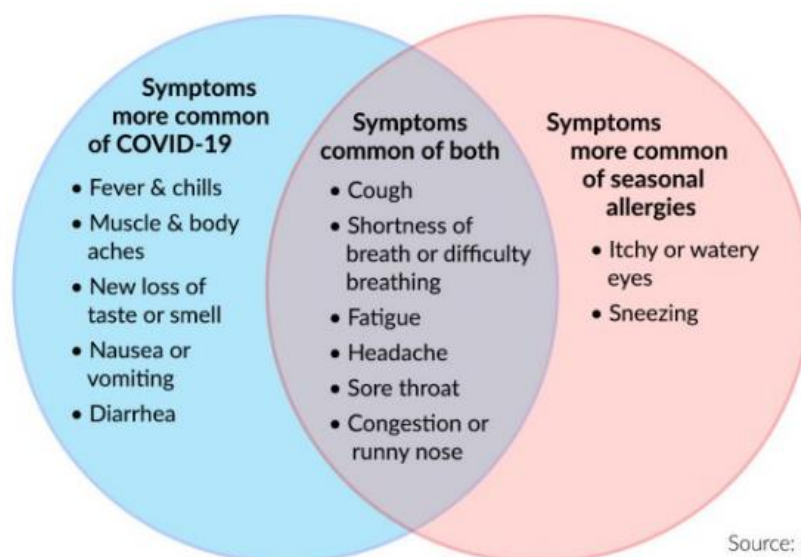
Coronavirus vs. Allergy Symptoms

Warm spring weather can mark the arrival of watery eyes, sneezing, congestion, headache and even a cough. And with concerns during the pandemic along with allergy season starting, there may be times when you aren't sure if your symptoms are due to allergies or to COVID-19.

Here's how you may tell the difference between seasonal allergies and COVID-19 symptoms. If you have a fever, chills, and lose your sense of taste and smell, that can indicate an infection, so you should definitely get a coronavirus test.

Allergies are rarely associated with a fever. They usually affect your upper respiratory system, so you are more likely to have itchy, watery eyes and a runny nose as noted by Panagis Galiatsatos, MD, MHS

Assistant Professor,
Division of Pulmonary and
Critical Care Medicine,
Johns Hopkins School of
Medicine. Most people
with seasonal allergies
know their symptoms.
If it's what you feel every
year, it's probably not
COVID.



Source: CDC

Those who are showing concern need to pay attention to what makes your symptoms worse.

If you're fine when you're indoors and the windows are closed, but then you go out on a dry, windy day and start sneezing your head off, yes, it is most likely an allergy. If you are still uncertain, there's no downside to getting a COVID-19 test.

The graphic provided by U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows the symptoms unique to each condition, and which symptoms they share.

How You Can Reduce your exposure

- Keep windows closed and filter indoor air. When driving, set the controls to "recirculate" so your car isn't pulling in outside air that's filled with pollen.
- When outside, wear glasses and a hat, as they keep pollen from striking your face and eyes.
- Reduce pollen cling. Change your clothes after being outside, and take a shower if you can, to wash the pollen grains off your hair and body. Leave your shoes outside the door.
- Consult an allergy specialist if symptoms cause you concern. Allergists can tests to diagnose your allergy, and prescribe medications.