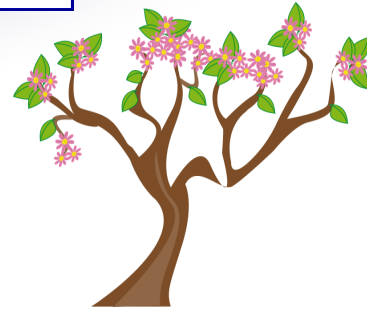


# Healthy Kids West Virginia

West Virginia Child Care Nurse Health Consultants and Health Educators Newsletter



## Spring Means Springtime Allergies By Karen Gilbert, RN

“Spring allergies can cause a lot of misery for millions of people in the U.S.,” says Kenneth Mendez, AAFA President and CEO. The spring allergy season begins with pollen released by trees and then grasses and weeds in later spring. Grasses are the most common cause of allergy. Ragweed is the main cause of weed allergies. Other common sources of pollen include sagebrush, pig-weed, lamb’s quarters and tumbleweed, as well as trees, including birch, cedar and oak. During the warm spring days, we open windows and spend more time outdoors. This allows pollen to get inside our places of work, homes, cars and to be breathed in. The most common symptoms of springtime allergies are:

Runny nose - mucus	Stuffy nose - congestion	Sneezing
Red, watery eyes	Itchy eyes, ears, nose, mouth	Swelling around the eyes

On days that pollen is high for the trees or grass you are allergic to, take these actions to reduce your pollen exposure:

- Limit outdoor activities.
- Keep windows closed.
- Use central air conditioning with air filtration.
- Wear sunglasses when you are outdoors.
- Wear a hat to cover your hair.
- Take a shower and shampoo your hair before going to bed to remove pollen.
- Change and wash clothes worn during outdoor activities.
- Dry your laundry in a clothes dryer, not on an outdoor line.
- Limit close contact with pets that spend a lot of time outdoors.
- Wipe pets off with a towel before they enter your home.
- Remove your shoes before entering your home.
- Wash bedding in hot, soapy water once a week.
- Rinse the inside of your nose with a nasal rinse to flush out pollens you have inhaled.

Use an **allergy air cleaner** (portable or whole house/HVAC).

Treatments for short- and long-term control of allergies are available.

Over-the-counter or prescription allergy medicines - some medications work best if you start taking them before the allergy season begins. These treatments can be in the form of pills, liquids, sprays, or drops.

Immunotherapy (allergy shots)- shots are a long-term treatment for pollen allergy. They can help prevent or reduce the severity of allergic reactions.

Sublingual Immunotherapy- involves placing a tablet containing the allergen under the tongue for 1 to 2 minutes and then swallowing it. These tablets are taken daily before and during grass or ragweed season.

<https://www.aafa.org/pollen-allergy/> [Medical Review](#) October 2015.

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# Bee Stings By Glenna Bailey, RN

Spring means the return of bees and the chance for bee stings increase. For most children bee stings mean mild pain and discomfort for a few hours, but for some it could be a matter of life or death.

Simple precautions can be taken to decrease the chances of a child being stung.

- Sweet scented products such as perfumes or lotion may attract bees and should be avoided.
- Bees may be attracted to heat given off by dark clothing, so light colored clothing is best.
- Inspect the outdoor play area regularly for bees' nests.
- Do not allow children to walk around outdoors with bare feet.

When a bee stings, a stinger may be left in the skin. This should be removed quickly by scraping it with a fingernail or the edge of a credit card. Avoid squeezing the stinger as this could inject more venom into the skin. Wasps do not leave their stingers behind. Wash the affected area and apply a cold compress to decrease pain and swelling.

Symptoms that accompany most bee stings include redness, swelling, pain and itching at the site of the sting. For some children who are allergic to bees, the result may be a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction. In this reaction children may suffer hives all over the body, difficulty breathing, throat tightness, wheezing, dizziness, stomach cramps or vomiting. Anaphylaxis is a medical emergency and 911 should be called right away. If the child has an Epi-Pen ordered, it should be administered according to the Individualized Health Care Plan.

Make sure Epi-Pens or other epinephrine injectors ordered for children are kept readily available and check frequently for expiration dates. Any expired epinephrine injectors should be returned to the parent so that a replacement can be made.



# Healthy Fruit Insects Submitted by Alex Binegar

1 pineapple  
2 mangoes  
1 kiwi  
Strawberries  
Seedless black grapes



Cut the pineapple in half lengthwise. Cut a v-shaped groove into the core. Remove the rind from the pineapple, leaving a half-circle with a groove on top. Use a knife to carve out grooves along the outer curve of the pineapple's flesh. Cut the slices to make several little pineapple butterflies. Place in pairs on a serving tray.

Peel the mango and remove the stone. Cut the flesh into slices, then cut the slices in half, trimming to resemble butterfly wings.

Peel and slice the kiwi and arrange on top of the butterflies.

Cut some strawberries in half and place on top of the mango slices as seen in the photo.

Cut the remaining strawberries into thin strips and use to make the antennae.

Cut strips from the pineapple, mango, and kiwi trimmings and use for feelers and bodies.

Add black grapes for the butterfly markings.

\*Recipe from <https://eatsmarter.com/recipes/healthy-fruit-insects>

## Spring Activity Ideas Submitted by Alex Binegar

Spring is a great time to plant and grow your own fruits or veggies if you don't already do so. Allowing children to grow their own produce gives them a sense of pride - AND makes those picky eaters more likely to try new foods!



Go on a hike and have children identify signs of spring, such as flowers, birds, and sounds.



Have children partner up and take turns blowing bubbles and running after them before they pop.



Assist children in assembling bird feeders to hang outdoors in an area where they can watch birds come and go.



# Springtime Tips For Poison Prevention

As you begin spring cleaning and work on the yard, follow these simple tips to keep your family safe:

## *Household cleaners and other products*

- Keep poisons in the containers they came in. Do not use food containers (such as cups or bottles) to store household cleaners and other chemicals or products. These should be stored away from food.
- Read and follow directions for the use of products and their disposal. Do this before using the products. Follow the advice carefully and never mix chemicals or household cleaners or detergents. Doing so can create a poisonous gas.
- Turn on fans and open windows when using chemicals or household cleaners and never sniff containers to see what's inside.
- When spraying chemicals, direct spray nozzle away from people and pets.
- Even in small amounts, windshield wiper fluid is poisonous. If swallowed, it can cause blindness or death to people or pets. Use it carefully to avoid spraying it in someone's face.
- Chemicals can burn the skin. Drain openers, toilet cleaners, rust removers, and oven cleaners can cause such burns.
- Liquids made from petroleum, such as gasoline, kerosene, charcoal lighter fluid, paint thinner, baby oil, lamp oil, and furniture polish are poisonous.
- If these items are swallowed, they can easily get into the lungs. Even a small amount can cause breathing problems. The liquid coats the inside of the lungs and prevents oxygen from entering the blood stream.

## *Pesticides*

- Pesticides (pest killers) can be absorbed through the skin or inhaled and can be extremely poisonous. Even leather shoes and gloves do not offer full protection. Stay away from areas that have been sprayed until the spray has dried or for at least one hour.
- Wear protective clothing when using bug spray or other spray products. Put on a long sleeve shirt, long pants, socks, shoes, and gloves. Remove and wash clothing after using chemicals.
- If pesticides are splashed onto the skin, rinse with running water for 15 to 20 seconds. If pesticide contacts clothing, take off clothing before rinsing skin.
- Many garden chemicals are poisonous if swallowed or inhaled by children and adults.

Call Poison Control in any case of accidental poisoning.



Retrieved and adapted from:

<https://poisonhelp.hrsa.gov/what-can-you-do/prevention-tips/seasonal-tips/index.html#spring>

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“This program is being presented with financial assistance as a grant from the WV Department of Health and Human Resources and is administered by WV Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources, a program of River Valley Child Development Services.”



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