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Allergies and Asthma: What Every Parent Needs to Know, Your Child's Health Series

Michael J. Welch, editor
American Academy of Pediatrics (February 2011)
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When a kid is sniffling, wheezing, coughing, and sneezing, what's the cause? It might be a cold, but it might also be allergies—physiological reactions often caused by overactive immune systems. Nearly 50 million Americans have allergies, and although allergies can develop at any age, they most commonly present symptoms during childhood or young adulthood.

Multiple allergens provoke allergic symptoms. For instance, a five-year-old's seasonal runny nose, itchy, puffy eyes, and sneezing, or hives after eating peanuts all indicate allergies. Wheezing and shortness of breath following exercise or contact with a substance like cat dander also suggest asthma, an inflammation of the airways.

Allergies tend to run in families, and common ones include hay fever, asthma, and eczema (patches of itchy, red skin rash). While many aspects of allergies are not fully understood, advances in research and treatment can reduce the symptoms for sufferers. This book provides detailed explanations that can help in recognizing and dealing with all kinds of allergies, from the minor to the most severe. It also addresses lifestyle adjustments to ease living with asthma and allergies. Symptoms, medical explanations of the body's reactions, and treatments are amply discussed and the text is accompanied by helpful tips, charts, and lists.

A roster of hidden food allergens in the appendix alerts readers to potential hazards in processed foods, and will help parents (and older children) read labels to identify problematic ingredients, such as egg, milk, soy protein, wheat, and peanut products. Other appendices include allergy and asthma resources, product information, and a comprehensive glossary.

Allergies and Asthma will be an invaluable resource and reference guide for parents, caregivers, and teachers, and will be a useful addition to school and public library shelves.

Editor-in-chief Michael J. Welch, M.D., is co-director of the Allergy and Asthma Medical Group and Research Center in San Diego, California, and clinical professor at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine. Multiple medical experts contributed to the 2nd edition of the book, *Allergies and Asthma: What Every Parent Needs to Know,* formerly titled *Your Child's Allergies and Asthma: The American Academy of Pediatrics Guide to Breathing Easy and Bringing Up Healthy, Active Children.*

PENNY HASTINGS (January / February 2011)

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