

April 2023

# Live Well, Work Well



## Managing Seasonal Allergies

Seasonal allergies are an annual nuisance for many people and typically ramp up this time of year. As plants bloom and neighbours cut their grass more frequently, people living with allergies across the nation start sniffing and sneezing. Further, as mould growth occurs both indoors and outdoors, it can be almost impossible to escape these seasonal allergy triggers.

Some allergy sufferers experience occasional sneezing. However, for others, a wide range of debilitating symptoms can occur over weeks or months, including congestion, a runny or itchy nose, watery eyes and headaches.



The Canadian Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Foundation reported that 20% to 25% of the population has allergic rhinitis (also known as hay fever).

### Nip Your Allergies in the Bud

Similar to other types of allergies, seasonal allergies develop when your body's immune system detects and then overreacts to a foreign substance it deems harmful. Spring, summer and fall are the most common times for seasonal allergy symptoms to arise. What may trigger your seasonal allergies depends on what you're allergic to and where you live; pollen is a common allergen that affects many people.

To reduce your seasonal allergy symptoms, consider the following tips:

- Keep track of local allergen (e.g., pollen and mould) counts to help you know when to avoid spending excessive time outside.
- Wash your bedding in hot water to help keep the spread of pollen under control in your home.
- Utilize washable indoor rugs to easily remove allergens.
- Take a shower after spending time outdoors, as pollen can stick to your hair, skin and clothing.
- Clean your floors often with a vacuum that has a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter.
- Change your air conditioning and heating HEPA filters often.

Treatment for most seasonal allergies is available both over the counter and by prescription. You may need a series of allergy shots if your symptoms are severe or chronic. Contact your doctor or allergist to determine which seasonal allergy treatment option is best for you.

For further health and well-being tips, contact us today.

# Improve Your Mood With Spring Cleaning

Nearly three-fifths (59%) of Canadians engage in spring cleaning each year, according to a recent Ipsos survey. A growing body of research has found that spring cleaning has several health benefits. Indeed, the same survey found that 94% of adults who engage in spring cleaning feel a strong sense of accomplishment afterward, with 89% believing that a clean home is important for mental and physical health. Bolster your well-being this April by leveraging the following three spring-cleaning tips:

1. **Create a schedule.** Having a plan can help you stay focused on the task at hand. As such, scope out your home and decide which areas need the most attention. Begin with any areas that are missed during usual cleaning practices, and then clean room by room. If needed, utilize an online spring-cleaning checklist.
2. **Set yourself a declutter challenge.** Determine a realistic decluttering goal. For instance, try to get rid of 50 things in one weekend. Place items into three boxes—“put away,” “give away” and “storage”—and have a large garbage bag close by for anything else. Avoid sentimentality; be firm and decisive when purging items.
3. **Remember neglected areas.** Remember to clean often forgotten areas, such as blinds, carpets and radiators. Additionally, vacuum your mattress to rid it of dust mites and launder duvets and bed linens.

## Take Control of Your Stress

April is Stress Awareness Month, an annual event seeking to raise awareness of the causes of and cures for the modern-day stress epidemic. While short-term stress can increase alertness and improve performance in certain situations, long-term stress can be bad for your health. Stress can cause several health concerns, including digestive issues, insomnia, anxiety and depression.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 outbreak resulted in high stress levels in people across the globe, and some are still suffering from its effects. In fact, 46% of Canadians now feel more sensitive to stress than they did before the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a recent LifeWorks' Mental Health Index. If you're one of them or you struggle with chronic stress, it's critical to take control of your stress to prevent health complications. This April, leverage stress management techniques to regulate your stress levels: consider talking to others, taking time to unwind and practising meditation. Alternatively, visit the government website for further [coping strategies](#).

If stress levels persist, contact a medical professional for advice.

## Flatbread Pizza

*Makes: 4 servings*

### Ingredients

4 small whole-grain flour tortillas  
60 ml (¼ cup) pasta sauce  
5 ml (1 tsp) Italian seasoning  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 small red bell pepper, chopped  
175 ml (¾ cup) chopped fresh mushrooms  
60 ml (¼ cup) chopped lean roast turkey  
250 ml (1 cup) shredded part-skim mozzarella  
30 ml (2 tbsp) chopped fresh parsley, optional

### Preparations

1. Place the tortillas on a large baking sheet and put to one side.
2. Add the pasta sauce, herb seasoning and garlic into a small bowl and stir to combine. Spread thinly onto the tortillas.
3. Sprinkle tortillas with red, pepper, mushroom and turkey, and top with mozzarella.
4. Bake the tortillas in a preheated 200 C (400 F) oven for approximately eight minutes, or until the cheese is melted. If desired, sprinkle with parsley before serving.

*Source: Canada's Food Guide*