Pollen

Pollen is a fine powder produced by certain plants when they reproduce.

Ragweed

Pollen of the ragweed plant is a common allergen.

For more information on Asthma and Allergies, see the Center for Disease Control and prevention (CDC) web site:
http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/asthma/

Environmental Health
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ALLERGY FACTS

Allergy is characterized by an overreaction of the human immune system to a foreign protein substance ("allergen") that is eaten, breathed into the lungs, injected or touched.

Typical Symptoms are congestion, runny nose, itchy eyes, sneezing, watery eyes, sore throat, itchy throat, headaches, and itchy ears. In severe cases, symptoms can include rashes, hives, lower blood pressure, difficulty breathing, asthma attacks, and even death.

Approximately 40 million Americans have indoor/outdoor allergies as their primary allergy (Allergic rhinitis; seasonal/perennial allergies; hay fever; nasal allergies)

The most common indoor/outdoor allergy triggers are: tree, grass and weed pollen; mold spores; dust mite and cockroach allergen; and, cat, dog and rodent dander. Approximately 10 million people are allergic to cat dander, the most common pet allergy.

10 ways to beat allergy symptoms

1. Do a thorough spring cleaning, washing the windows, book shelves, air conditioning vents, and anywhere that dust and mold may collect during the winter months.
2. Know peak pollen times and counts in your area, and avoid outdoor activities during these hours.
3. Wear a filter mask when mowing or raking the lawn.
4. Run the air conditioner inside the house and in the car, instead of opening windows.
5. Remove your shoes, change your clothes and take a shower as soon as you get home, allergens like pollen stick to fabrics. So, try not to track them through your home.
6. Dry your clothes indoors for a while. While environmentally friendly, hanging sheets or clothes outside to dry will expose them to allergens that you’ll bring back into the house.
7. Shower nightly to wash off any pollen grains on your face and body. If you can’t wash your hair nightly, at least tie it up and away from your face.
8. Make an appointment with an allergist/immunologist to see if there’s a medication that’ll help to control your allergy symptoms.
9. Take an over the counter antihistamine and/or decongestant, or speak to your doctor about a prescription drug to control your seasonal symptoms.