

Allergies are a pain to deal with on a regular basis. The sneezing, the itchy eyes, the scratchy throat, and you wonder why is this happening. Our immune system is designed to protect us from illnesses such as colds, the flu, and other types of infections. The immune system consists of white blood cells that attack bacteria or other harmful substances. Its job is to rid your body of germs and keep you healthy. When you suffer from allergies your white blood cells over reacts to substances that are not harmful. The over reactions is what causes the allergy symptoms.

Milk, eggs and other dairy products can cause a majority of allergic reactions. Children that obtain allergies from dairy products can and usually outgrow their condition by the time they reach adult years. Most adults are allergic to peanuts and tree nuts such as walnuts, almonds, and cashews. Allergies from milk and other dairy products are more common in children than in adults.

An animal's hair can cause allergies no matter how long or short it may be because most mammalian pets produce skin flakes (dander), saliva, urine and skin oils. The best thing to do is to identify THE sources of your allergy. A good way to figure out the causes would be to have an allergy skin test. This test would expose you to allergens and then your skin is checked for allergic reactions. The skin test will determine what is causing your symptoms.

ATTENTION: CALLING ALL ALLERGEY SUFFERS

BY: MELODY KIRKPATRICK

Another way to get help with allergic reactions would be to receive allergy shots. Allergy shots are given on a schedule in order to have a long term effect. It may take three years before you see your best results. If you don't see improvement within the first year, then your doctor may have to make some changes. You might need a bigger dosage or more treatments in a fewer amount of time.

There are medications that help treat allergies and give you temporary relief. Antihistamines are found in medications like Benadryl and Claritin. Histamines are released by your white blood cells when they are attacking germs in your body. That is what causes the itchy red eyes and the other symptoms because the histamine binds to your blood vessels. The antihistamines are taking to stop anymore histamines from being released.

Some prescription medicines like Claritin -D, Allegra - D and Zrytec - D are made up of decongestants. Decongestants work during an allergic reaction because it shrinks swollen nasal tissues and blood vessels to relieve the watery eyes, congestion and swelling. The best approach is to find a method that works best for you.

My sinus starts whenever it wants. I know my best medication is Benadryl that really clears my sinus trouble but it makes me extremely tired. I wish they could come up with a cure to keep allergies away for good.

I am sick and tired of popping pills every day. I was thinking that stem cell research would open up the doors for a lot of medical underground secrets. Maybe stem cell research would began with allergies. Tune in next month for my next article.

FACULTY AND STAFF AT THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER:

WINI GAY: EXT 5040

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CARMEN LENTZ:EXT 5036

FROM THE WELL OF A WISE WOMAN HOMESICK - WHO ME?

CARMEN LENTZ, LPC, NCC, DCC

Homesick - Who Me?

So you've gotten unpacked and unloaded, and all those boxes of stuff that you accumulated during the months before coming to school now have a new home in your dorm room. But, perhaps you ask yourself, where is my sense of belonging, my connectedness to things safe and familiar? I think I left that at home!

If you feel "homesick", you are not alone. Many incoming students at campuses everywhere share similar feelings: missing family, friends, and the familiarity of your hometown; feeling overwhelmed, maybe having difficulty eating and sleeping. Upperclassmen remember when they were newcomers and experienced the discomfort of the unfamiliar themselves. The good news is that there are a number of things you can do to help yourself adjust and feel better. Here are the top ten most recommended tips:

1) Learn your way around - everyone who finds himself or herself in a new environment feels lost and disoriented at first. Since all your fellow freshmen are new too, find someone and go exploring. Walk around campus, learn where things are, acquaint yourself with the names of buildings and where academic departments,

The more you know about your surroundings, the sooner your feelings of being more at ease, and eventually at home, will begin. Soon, you'll be directing folks to Ferrago and explaining what "The Wall" is to others!

2) Accept that things will be different, but different isn't bad! No, this isn't your old school, or hometown, or whatever, that's true. Part of maturing is learning to be at ease in strange, unfamiliar circumstances, until they have a chance to become more comfortable and familiar. Frequently, that "differentness" becomes something to be celebrated if you hang in there!

3) Give yourself time - homesickness usually does tend to get better over time, but you have to be willing to give yourself that time and learn to tolerate some discomfort while you adjust to your new environment. Remind yourself that things will get better! A month or two is not an unusual amount of time to need to get used to a new place and to begin to settle in and feel a connection.

4) Get involved - one of the best antidotes to homesickness is to be involved with other people. Join a club, check out what's happening on campus, pursue extracurricular activities, take part in dorm activities, connect with

others!

5) Focus on what you are gaining - when you decided to come to St... Andrews, there was a reason. What did you hope to gain from the experience? Instead of thinking about the things you miss, remind yourself of what you will achieve by being here and all the new experiences you will have to share with family and friends when you do return home.

6) Talk about your feelings - Homesickness is natural and just about everyone feels it at least a little bit! If you are having trouble coping, talk to a friend, your RA, your roommate, or come over to the Counseling Center. Once you have a place to vent, chances are you'll feel better.

7) Bring a piece of home with you - keep mementos of home close by and share them with your new acquaintances - pictures of home, friends and family, posters, music, whatever will help you transition and will help give the new people you'll meet a sense of who you are and where you come from.

8) Plan a visit - if it is feasible, plan to invite your family and friends to visit you on campus. You can act as their tour guide, and help them to get to know your new world and the people in it. If it helps to go home for a