Name: _____ Date: _____

When Your Body Mistakes Pollen for a Threat

Circle group

Spring comes. The trees bloom. Some people start to sneeze. Their eyes itch and their noses run. They do not have a cold. They have an allergy. It comes from a mistake inside the body.

Your immune system guards you from germs. It is good at finding bad invaders and fighting them. But sometimes it gets mixed up. With an allergy, the immune system sees something harmless as a threat. Pollen is one example. Pollen is the fine dust that plants make. The immune system sounds an alarm. It lets out a chemical called histamine. Histamine makes the nose runny. It makes the eyes watery. It makes the skin itchy.

Other things can cause allergies. Some people react to pet fur or dust. Some react to certain foods. Food allergies need special care. A tiny bit of the wrong food can make a person very ill. They must read labels and ask what is in a meal. That is why some schools have tables with no certain foods. You should not share your snack with a friend who has an allergy unless a grown-up says it is safe.

Doctors can help. They find the cause. They give medicine to ease the symptoms. With a plan, people with allergies enjoy spring too.

Questions

1. What is the immune system?

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2. What mistake does the body make with an allergy?

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3. What does histamine do?

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4. Why must people with food allergies read labels?

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5. What is pollen?

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6. Why should you not share snacks with a friend who has an allergy?

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Words to know

allergy: when the body reacts badly to something harmless
pollen: the fine yellow dust that flowers and trees make
invaders: things that come in where they should not be
histamine: a chemical the body releases during an allergy
symptoms: signs that show you are ill or have a problem

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

When Your Body Mistakes Pollen for a Threat

Triangle group

Spring arrives, the trees bloom, and some people start sneezing. Their eyes itch and their noses run. They are not sick with a cold. They have an allergy, and it all comes from a mistake inside the body.

Your immune system is the team that guards you against germs. It is good at spotting dangerous invaders and attacking them. But sometimes it gets confused. With an allergy, the immune system sees something harmless, such as pollen, as a threat. Pollen is the fine dust that plants make. The immune system sounds the alarm and releases a chemical called histamine. Histamine makes the nose runny, the eyes watery, and the skin itchy or blotchy.

Other things can cause allergies, too. Some people react to pet fur, dust, or certain foods. Food allergies deserve special care. A tiny bit of the wrong food can make a person very ill, so they must read labels and ask what is in a meal. That is why many schools have tables where certain foods are not allowed, and why you should never share your snack with a friend who has an allergy unless a grown-up says it is safe.

Doctors can help. They can find out what causes an allergy and suggest medicine to ease the symptoms. With some planning, people with allergies enjoy spring just like everyone else.

Questions

1. What is the immune system?

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2. What mistake does the body make when someone has an allergy?

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3. What does histamine do?

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4. Why must people with food allergies read labels?

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5. What is pollen?

_____

_____

6. Why should you not share snacks with a friend who has an allergy?

_____

_____

Words to know

allergy: when the body reacts badly to something harmless
pollen: the fine yellow dust that flowers and trees make
invaders: things that come in where they should not be
histamine: a chemical the body releases during an allergy
symptoms: signs that show you are ill or have a problem

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

When Your Body Mistakes Pollen for a Threat

Square group

When spring arrives and the trees burst into bloom, some people begin to sneeze. Their eyes itch, and their noses start to run. They are not suffering from a cold. They have an allergy, which originates from a mistake made inside the body.

Your immune system is the team that defends you against germs. It excels at recognizing dangerous invaders and attacking them. Occasionally, however, it becomes confused. When someone has an allergy, the immune system interprets something harmless, such as pollen, as a serious threat. Pollen is the fine dust that plants produce. The immune system sounds the alarm and releases a chemical called histamine, which makes the nose runny, the eyes watery, and the skin itchy or blotchy.

Many other things can trigger allergies. Some people react to pet fur, dust, or particular foods. Food allergies deserve special care, because even a tiny amount of the wrong food can make a person extremely ill. Those individuals must read labels carefully and ask what is in a meal. That is the reason many schools set aside tables where certain foods are not permitted, and why you should never share your snack with a friend who has an allergy unless a grown-up confirms that it is safe.

Doctors can certainly help. They can determine what causes an allergy and recommend medicine to ease the symptoms. With careful planning, people with allergies can enjoy spring just like everyone else.

Questions

1. What is the immune system?

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2. What mistake does the body make when someone has an allergy?

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3. What effects does histamine have on the body?

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4. Why must people with food allergies read labels carefully?

_____

_____

5. What is pollen?

_____

_____

6. Why should you never share your snack with a friend who has an allergy?

_____

_____

Words to know

allergy: when the body reacts badly to something harmless
pollen: the fine yellow dust that flowers and trees make
invaders: things that come in where they should not be
histamine: a chemical the body releases during an allergy
symptoms: signs that show you are ill or have a problem

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: When Your Body Mistakes Pollen for a Threat

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: When Your Body Mistakes Pollen for a Threat

Easier · 212 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.8

1. The team in your body that guards against germs.
2. It sees something harmless, like pollen, as a threat.
3. It makes the nose runny, the eyes watery, and the skin itchy.
4. A tiny bit of the wrong food can make them very ill.
5. The fine dust that plants make.
6. The snack might have something that could make your friend ill.

Triangle: When Your Body Mistakes Pollen for a Threat

This passage · 225 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.4

1. The team in your body that guards against germs.
2. It treats something harmless, like pollen, as a threat.
3. It makes the nose runny, the eyes watery, and the skin itchy.
4. A tiny bit of the wrong food can make them very ill.
5. The fine dust that plants make.
6. The snack might contain something that could make your friend ill.

Square: When Your Body Mistakes Pollen for a Threat

Harder · 239 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 8

1. The team in your body that defends you against germs.
2. It interprets something harmless, such as pollen, as a serious threat.
3. It makes the nose runny, the eyes watery, and the skin itchy or blotchy.
4. Even a tiny amount of the wrong food can make them extremely ill.
5. The fine dust that plants produce.
6. The snack might contain something that could make your friend ill.