

## **Ragweed is on the rise and help is on the way**

Ragweed grows most commonly in the Eastern and Midwestern United States and lives one season. Nature guides ragweed's clock. Mid-August typically marks the opening of ragweed season, with diminishing daylight that can stimulate plant pollination. The season peaks in late August and typically ends late September.

During its short life, ragweed can wreak havoc among those who are sensitive to it with each plant producing up to 1 billion pollen grains. Its lightweight enables the pollen grains to travel in the air up to 400 miles, creating a wide swath of suffering for the ragweed allergic.

And there's more bad news. Ragweed allergies are on the increase\* and climate change may be the culprit according to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. Studies suggest that as temperatures and carbon dioxide levels rise, longer ragweed seasons and more concentrated pollen counts follow.

But there's good news too...help is available. Over-the-counter antihistamine and decongestant combinations, along with nasal sprays and eye drops, can temporarily relieve symptoms. The key is taking them early on, before symptoms are at their worst. For ragweed sufferers who want a long-term solution, sublingual allergy drops can help "retrain" the immune system to tolerate ragweed, eventually eliminating symptoms and the need for long-term meds for many sufferers. Ragweed sufferers can also get a boost before ragweed season with preseasonal treatment that helps the body begin to build tolerance before the season begins.

For more information about treating the cause of your ragweed allergy, contact [clinic].

\*Sources: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology, EPA, Allergy Associates of La Crosse.