

HAAACHEW! IT'S AUTUMN, IT'S BEAUTIFUL ...
AND IT'S RAGWEED TIME AGAIN.

Yes, just when you thought the allergy season was over ... think again! Along with the beautiful colors and holidays also come a few tricksters, trying to wreak havoc on all the fun, fall festivities.

If you're new to the area, and start sneezing, coughing, wheezing and you have itchy eyes and a runny nose ... welcome to Washington ... it just may be our "ole faithful" Ragweed. Often it attacks suddenly and severely.

In fact, "allergy symptoms account for more visits to the doctor's office than any other single disease," says Dr. Ellaurie, of Allergy Care Centers, located in Vienna, Gaithersburg, and Wheaton Plaza. "Over 50 million Americans (about 1 in 5) suffer from one or more allergic diseases."

Anyone who has suffered from an allergy, whether an inhalant (something we breathe) or a food allergy, knows all too well that the symptoms are brutal. Allergies are a leading cause of kids missing school and of decreased productivity for adults in the work place.

While Ragweed is our worst outside enemy, during the fall months, there are other culprits who also deserve mention. There are outdoor molds, which increase as the leaves fall off the trees and decay. This produces more airborne spores into the air. And then, there's the ever-present air pollution problem, which has increased the incidence of all allergies, especially respiratory and asthma.

As the weather begins to cool off, we all retreat inside our homes to cozy up for the winter. Well ... according to Dr. Ellaurie, we should try to stay a little less cozy and keep our indoor temperature a bit under 70 degrees. It seems the dust mites thrive on higher temperatures and higher humidity, as does mold. Molds love damp places like basements, bathrooms and windowsills.

Dust mites are the major villain indoors and play a prominent role in causing asthma in children. "Since the sixties, with an increased use of carpet in homes, dust mites have increased," Dr. Ellaurie adds.

They also love upholstered couches and chairs and mattresses, linens and dried flowers.

Live plants are wonderful, but be aware they increase the humidity, which fosters mold growth. Also avoid ceiling fans, which keep the airborne spores suspended. Be sure to keep heating vents and filters clean also.

Use light fabrics for curtains, upholstery, and bedding when possible and consider leather or vinyl furniture coverings instead of fabric. Always use hypoallergenic comforters and

pillows. And, if you have pets, bathe them once a week. Of course, the dogs and cats may not approve of the weekly bath idea, but that's your call.

And let's not forget the on-going food allergies. There's a "triad" in children that indicate food allergies, according to Dr. Ellaurie. It is: eczema, asthma, and nasal congestion. For mothers-to-be, breast-feeding for 6 months is a marvelous preventative. Some symptoms to look for may include hives, itching, skin rashes, redness, swelling, coughing, wheezing and difficulty breathing. Also, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain.

Common food allergies in children are milk, eggs, peanuts and cereals. Adults more often are allergic to seafood and peanuts. Early diagnosis is important, so the offending food can be isolated and eliminated, making life much more comfortable.

The Allergy Care Centers use the latest advancements to test for inhalants (airborne allergens). Gone are the days of the tiny pricks on patients' backs! And food allergies are tested in their own lab, using a small blood sample.

For treatment, there are new, non-sedating antihistamines that are used safely for adults as well as children. They provide relief from sneezing, itchy, watery eyes and runny nose. There are also effective nasal sprays and eye drops. And for those very stubborn cases, there is safe immunotherapy (injections), which builds up the body's immune system against the allergies.

Don't let another month go by if you're suffering from any of these symptoms. The Allergy Care Centers are dedicated to helping you feel better ... quickly. They are conveniently located in Vienna, VA, Gaithersburg, MD and Wheaton Plaza in Wheaton, MD. Call them at 1.800.287.2829

By Carolyn Permentier
For The Washington Post

TWENTIETH CENTURY TECHNOLOGY IN A WARM, INVITING FAMILY-OWNED DENTAL PRACTICE

This 35 year old dental practice in Washington D.C. provides busy Washingtonians with the latest advancements in both technology and cosmetic procedures ... all in a lovely, warm, family atmosphere.

Dr. Sidney Markowitz and his son, Eric, specialize in cosmetic or aesthetic dentistry. You know ... those procedures that will make you look and feel your best. With the use of bleaching, bonding, veneering, crowns or even implants, you can safely and confidently spruce up your overall appearance all in one place.

Dr. Sidney says, "You know, there's an old saying about aging gracefully. But in our city, aging gracefully might be three facelifts, hair implants, some lipo and a tooth job. That's who we work on ... people who are into self-improvement."

While the average dental office does not have its own lab, this one does! What this means to patients is a savings of time AND money. Their new teeth, crowns or bridges can be made in a matter of hours instead of days. And, of course, the doctors can better control the quality of their own lab's work.

But the technology doesn't stop there. The Markowitz's office also hosts a video imaging system, which means they can take pictures of your teeth and make repairs, right there on the screen. So you feel more in control when deciding what work should be done, in order to achieve the look you want.

Change is difficult ... even when we want it. So when doctors are sensitive to these emotional aspects and "tune in" to their patients' needs ... they're really practicing evolved dentistry.

Cosmetic dentistry isn't the only thing the Markowitz's do. Eric Markowitz specializes in dentures and implants. Dentures are familiar to most of us, but what are implants? They are teeth replacements. If a patient loses a tooth or a more mature patient has dentures that are not as tight as they would like, then implant dentistry may be just the answer.

In the case of a lost tooth, Dr. Eric will build an artificial root, which will be implanted into your jaw. Then a new tooth will go on top of that. As an added source of confidence and comfort, he is one of the few dentists in the area who is also a surgeon. So, he does the entire process ... without sending you to another doctor for the surgery and then back to him again for the tooth.

All this saves you time, money and anxiety because Dr. Eric is doing all the work. And, of course, your new tooth will be made right there in the office lab, ensuring further quality.

“It’s no longer necessary for anyone to turn down an invitation to dinner because they’re embarrassed that their dentures sometimes slip or are not strong enough to sufficiently chew their food,” says Eric Markowitz. “Implants may be the answer to better secure your dentures and provide the confidence for a more secure you.”

Our society is more youthful than ever before, so it’s only logical that everyone wants to avail him/herself of all the help out there. Everyone loves a radiant smile and the confidence that comes from knowing we don’t have to worry about chewing difficulties or slipping dentures anymore.

“We all deserve to feel good about ourselves, no matter what our age or social standing. And the way we feel about ourselves directly affects our health and how we present ourselves to the world,” adds Dr. Eric.

As with all dental procedures, you will enjoy a complimentary consultation, reviewing your medical and dental history. By the time you decide what procedures are right for you, after seeing the “new you” on video, you’ll be grateful for the 20th century technology and thrilled with the family care.

Dr. Sidney also raises vegetables and cooks up “killer soups.” And he happily shares the veggies and soups with his patients.

Visit Dr. Sidney and Eric Markowitz at 1145 19th St. N.W., #316 Washington, D.C. 20036 Or call 202.833.8240

Dr. Sidney Markowitz is past President, American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry

Dr. Eric Markowitz is a Magna Cum Laude graduate of Baltimore College of Dental Surgery and a member of the Fellowship of Implant Prosthodontics.

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