

# The Pollen

Issue N°16 - Merry Sneezadays

Every year at this time, many people complain of allergies due to the Ole Tannenbaum. Although some people may actually have sensitivity to the sap of a fir tree, most people are reacting to other triggers that visit for the holidays. Let's look at what else could be causing your misery during this otherwise joyful time of year.



## The Christmas Tree

People can be sensitive to the sap of the tree. The sensitivity however, will only occur once the sap has had time to dry, fall off of the tree and its particles become airborne. Touching the needles of the tree can irritate your skin. For the most part, this irritation, not to be mistaken for allergies, is why people complain of being 'allergic' to the tree itself.

## Dust

Unless you buy all of your holiday decorations brand new each year, they were probably stored away and collecting dust. When you take them out to decorate, that dust can become agitated and airborne, leading you to go into a sneezing fit. Making sure that decoration containers are tightly closed when you put them back in storage, may help reduce your exposure but probably will not eliminate it.

## Insects

Dust mites and cockroaches also make homes in your stored holiday decorations. Although they may not physically be present (pun intended) when you unpack and decorate, your allergies can be triggered by their waste and dead bodies that are still present in the dust.

## Mold

Mold can grow on any organic material, such as cardboard boxes, wreathes, linens, and live Christmas trees. The Christmas tree however, if given over time can start to accumulate mold, this mold can eventually release spores into the air which will cause your symptoms. After the holidays, it is best to quickly discard any live decorations to minimize your chance of exposure to mold.

This holiday season, instead of leaning towards a conclusion that your symptoms are due to that big green tree, think about the other holiday items that have been collecting all sorts of allergic triggers. If you suffer during this time of year, testing and IT can help make the next season bright again.

Wishing you a happy and allergy free holiday!

# Happy Holidays!