



# Health Awareness

## Sending Out An S.O.S. For Relief From Itchy Allergy Eyes

(NAPSA)—If you find yourself constantly scratching and rubbing your eyes, you are not alone. An estimated 50 million Americans suffer from all types of allergies, and an estimated four percent of those individuals have eye allergies as their primary ailment.<sup>1</sup> Symptoms may include red, itchy, watery and/or swollen eyelids often accompanied by sneezing and a runny nose. Ocular allergies, also referred to as allergic conjunctivitis, are caused by external irritants called allergens. Some of the common household culprits that cause eye allergies are dust mites, mold, pet hair and pet dander while some of the common outdoor allergy triggers include tree, grass and weed pollen.

Eye drops are often used to relieve the symptoms associated with ocular allergies. With so many over-the-counter eye drops available, it can be overwhelming to sort through all those choices and find an allergy eye drop that will provide safe, quick and long-lasting relief.

### How Can I Relieve My Eye Allergy Symptoms?

- If you wear contact lenses, take them out.
- Chill out your eyes! Place cold compresses on your eyes to soothe them.
- Don't rub your eyes as it will only irritate them further.
- Try nonprescription allergy eye drops that are specifically labeled for eye itch relief. 

Dr. Paul Karpecki, an optometrist in Lexington, KY, offers three simple questions to use as a guide for purchasing the right allergy eye drop to relieve itchy eyes. “When my patients ask advice on which allergy eye drop they should use to relieve their eye allergy symptoms, I tell them that their choice should answer their ‘S.O.S.’ for relief.”

Dr. Karpecki's S.O.S. includes:

- Speed—How quickly will you feel relief?
- Ongoing—How long will that relief last?

- Safe—Will you have any reactions to the product?

“When looking for relief from allergic conjunctivitis or ‘itchy eyes’ I recommend an allergy eye drop like REFRESH® Eye Itch Relief as it offers a combination of antihistamine and mast-cell stabilizer that answers my patients’ need for quick and sustained relief, even those as young as three,” said Dr. Karpecki. “Antihistamines work by blocking the action of histamines, which are chemicals released from mast cells and white blood cells during an allergic response, and prevent the symptoms of an allergic reaction. The mast cell stabilizer reduces the release of inflammation-causing chemicals from mast cells.”

As allergens like dust mites, mold and weed pollen are here to stay, allergy eye drops can offer a solution for soothing red, itchy eyes so allergy sufferers can be more comfortable. For more information about treatment of ocular allergies, visit [www.REFRESHBrand.com](http://www.REFRESHBrand.com).

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<sup>1</sup>Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Web site. “Allergy Facts and Figures”. Available at: <http://www.aafa.org/display.cfm?id=9&sub=30>. Accessed May 29, 2008.

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