

## MEMPHIS HEALTHCARE

# IS IT ALLERGIES OR ILLNESS?

ENT Memphis helps patients navigate bothersome symptoms for sinus relief.

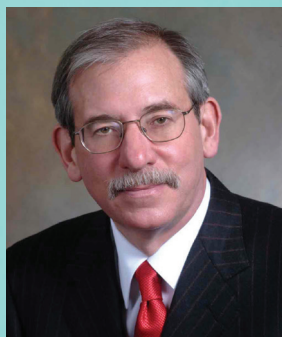
**A**utumn is a festive time of colorful leaves, hayrides, and pumpkin fun. But it can also be a time of heightened irritation of the sinuses. As kids return to school, they're in close quarters and exposed to a myriad of viruses that can cause runny noses, coughing, and sore throats. Inevitably, those illnesses are passed on to parents and caregivers, who may suffer similar or even worse symptoms.

At the same time, fall allergens begin emerging in mid-September and can cause symptoms that look—and feel—a lot like those school-time viruses: dry eyes, sneezing, and stuffy noses. Add the lingering presence of COVID-19 into the mix, and it can be hard for patients to decipher what's at the root of their pesky sinus pains.

So, how do you seek relief? At ENT Memphis, the first step is a thorough evaluation by specialists who understand the nuances of sinus care.

## Expert Evaluation

"When determining what is causing a patient's symptoms



Rande Lazar, M.D.

and how to best treat them, we consider factors like how persistent the symptoms have been and how severe they are. Newer symptoms are treated less aggressively than chronic symptoms," says Rande Lazar, M.D., owner and experienced otolaryngologist of ENT Memphis in Bartlett and East Memphis. "If you've been feeling poorly for a week or more, you should treat an ailment more aggressively."

A patient whose symptoms are acute, long-lasting, or involve a fever may be immediately placed on an antibiotic, antihistamine, and/or a nasal steroid to see if medication can help heal and reset the body. If symptoms are newer and less severe, sometimes small lifestyle

changes can go a long way towards reducing symptoms. Spending less time outside, changing clothes when coming inside, and washing the face and hands after outdoor exposure can help prevent allergens from getting directly into the sinuses. Washing hair, sheets, and pillowcases regularly can also help.

Preventive nasal sprays can be started in early-to-mid September to bolster the body before allergens emerge. "If you're trying to premedicate before the season starts, it's important to use a nasal steroid regularly, as it takes about

two weeks for it to really start becoming effective," says Dr. Lazar. "My advice is to treat early and effectively, because untreated symptoms may lead to chronic infections."

## Family-Friendly Practice

"Seasonal allergies often run in families," Dr. Lazar notes, and children can begin exhibiting allergy symptoms as early as toddlerhood. ENT Memphis treats patients of all ages "from birth to 100."

ENT Memphis offers same-day appointments and is available 24/7 for consultation. All major insurance plans are accepted. Referrals aren't necessary to schedule an appointment, though consulting with your primary care physician first is always a good idea.

"We work very closely with our primary care colleagues and encourage a collaborative approach to provide the best care for our patients," says Dr. Lazar.



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