

# Early spring means allergy season for Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Eyes swollen? Nose running?

It's allergy season in Tahoe and technically it's not even spring.

Mother Nature apparently has her own calendar. Trees are flowering in the Lake Tahoe Basin, bulbs are sprouting and some early bloomers are shining through.



Spring is in air in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Photo/LTN

According to the Weather Channel, the pollen forecast for today on the South Shore is “high” and will be “very high” on Wednesday and Thursday. The active trees are juniper, sycamore and willow.

“An earlier spring means there is more pollen earlier in the season and for perhaps a longer duration, too. It does not mean the allergy season will shorten – we are more likely to experience the opposite,” Ron Roth, otolaryngologist with Barton Health, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Seasons in Tahoe vary and there is no ‘normal’ here for allergy season.”

With the temperatures forecast to be in the 50s all week, the outdoors is calling. But that's the worst place to be for some allergy sufferers. But if dust is your problem, then calling in sick because you need to be outdoors could be the solution.

"To combat allergies, avoid contact with allergens to which you have sensitivities. That may involve limiting exposure to pets, dust, or time outdoors," Roth said. He said the most common allergies this time of year are pet dander, dust, pollen and insects.

Symptoms of allergies include runny or itchy nose, itchy and watery eyes, and sometimes a scratchy throat.

"The allergy skin test is the quickest, most inexpensive, and most accurate way to find out what you are allergic to, whether it's mold, grass pollen, or a type of weed," says Neil Kao, an internal medicine physician specializing in allergy and immunology at the Allergic Disease and Asthma Center in Greenville, S.C., told WebMD.

Over the counter medications should help most people.

"Avoid chronic use of nose sprays such as nasal sprays that are supposed to last for 12 hour periods. Frequent use over time can lead to inflammation and cause the congestion and nasal obstruction you are trying to resolve," Roth warned.