

Oral Allergy Syndrome

Oral allergy syndrome (OAS) is an allergic reaction to specific proteins found in certain fruits, vegetables, and nuts. This condition typically affects the mouth and throat. Most individuals with OAS have a history of pollen allergies or seasonal allergic rhinitis (hay fever) prior to developing symptoms. It is most commonly seen in older children and adults.

OAS occurs because the immune system recognizes similarities between proteins in pollens and proteins in certain foods, leading to an allergic response. Many people with OAS can tolerate these same foods when cooked, as heat alters and breaks down the proteins responsible for triggering symptoms.

Common pollens and associated foods:

- Birch pollen: apple, almond, carrot, celery, cherry, hazelnut, kiwi, peach, pear, plum
- Grass pollen: celery, melons, oranges, peaches, tomato
- Ragweed pollen: banana, cucumber, melons, sunflower seeds, zucchini

Symptoms usually begin within minutes of consuming the trigger food and may include:

- Itching or tingling of the mouth and throat, sometimes involving the lips
- Mild swelling or a bumpy sensation in the lips, mouth, or throat
- Some individuals may experience itchy hands when handling raw fruits or vegetables
- Abdominal discomfort or stomach pain
- Up to 10% of patients may develop a more severe, potentially life-threatening systemic reaction

Management of OAS:

- Avoidance of raw fruits and vegetables that cause symptoms
- Due to the risk of anaphylaxis, carrying an epinephrine auto-injector is recommended when reactions involve peanuts or tree nuts

See your allergist if:

- Your OAS symptoms cause significant throat discomfort
- Symptoms are becoming progressively worse
- Reactions occur with cooked fruits or vegetables
- Symptoms are triggered by tree nuts (such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, etc.)
- You develop systemic symptoms after eating raw fruits or vegetables, including hives, vomiting, or difficulty breathing



Pollen season	Spring ☼
	Summer ●
	Late Summer-Fall ☾
	Fall ●

Allergies to these pollens →
may trigger symptoms to these foods ↓

Fruits



- Apple
- Apricot
- Banana
- Cantaloupe
- Cherry
- Honeydew
- Kiwi
- Orange
- Peach
- Pear
- Plum
- Tomato
- Watermelon

Vegetables



- Bell pepper
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrot
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Chard
- Cucumber
- Garlic
- Onion
- Parsley
- White potato
- Zucchini

Legumes*

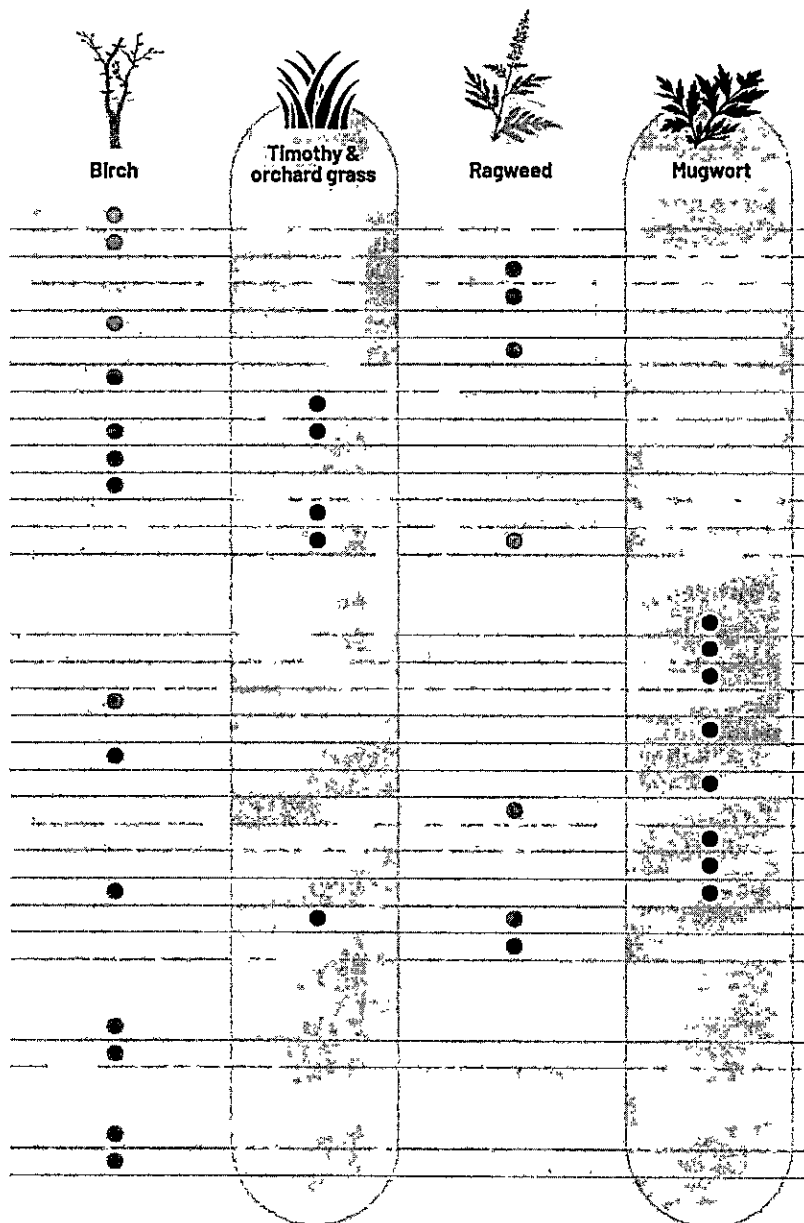


- Peanut
- Soybean

Tree Nuts*



- Almond
- Hazelnut



Adopted from <https://foodallergy.ca/>