



# USCG TAC Plus Newsletter

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## Health Spotlight: Allergy Management

This newsletter highlights allergy management and useful tips for dealing with symptoms while onboard.

## Food & Drug Allergy Management

All allergies can be serious. However, severe food/drug allergies can be fatal. The most common are antibiotics, shellfish, and peanuts. For those who are aware, it is best to carry a EpiPen as prescribed by your provider. Please note, these do expire; therefore, have them refilled ahead of boarding time.



For those who are unaware and have their first reaction, contact emergency services immediately. You can take over-the-counter antihistamines (like Benadryl\* products) to slow the reaction until you can seek medical attention.

# Seasonal Allergies

A reaction to airborne seasonal allergens may cause inflammation in the nose, eyes, and respiratory passages. The severity of symptoms varies depending on the type and concentration of allergens, highest in May to September in most regions. Traveling may present new exposures.



## Common seasonal allergens:

- Tree pollen
- Grass pollen
- Ragweed
- Mold

## Types of severe allergens:

- Bee stings
- Nut allergies, including tree nuts
- Shellfish
- dairy and eggs

Signs of severe or life-threatening reactions can include swelling of the face, mouth, lips, difficulty breathing, hives, and skin rashes. Treatments of these symptoms may vary depending on severity. For mild symptoms, antihistamines and topical medications may be recommended. In more severe cases, a medication such as epinephrine and urgent medical attention may be needed.

## Prevention is Key

- As part of the check-in process to your vessel, communicate food/medicine allergies to either the Captain, medical officer onboard, or crewing manager ashore.
- Be aware of allergens in food and drink and communicate this to servers when eating out. You may want to translate your allergy to the local language when abroad.
- For seasonal allergies, you can wear a mask during the heavy seasons. Many use proactive measures, like daily saline nasal sprays, or a navage, a type of sinus cleansing of the nasal passages to diminish the effects.

