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**Safe Driving Tips For Allergy Sufferers**

**By News Canada**

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by: **News Canada**

(NC)–Did you know that some medications can cause drowsiness which could affect your ability to drive your vehicle safely?

In particular, sedating antihistamines commonly used in the treatment of allergy symptoms can cause drowsiness at the wheel. If a medication does not say non-drowsy on the box then it usually means it is sedating. An allergy medication that is sedating could do any of the following:

Decrease your ability to learn

Decrease your attention span

Provoke memory loss

Interfere with your coordination and the precision of your movements

And cause inexplicable mood swings

All of these symptoms not only affect your productivity, they also affect your safety and that of others. Just think

about how a sedating medication could impair your driving skills. Safe driving simultaneously requires attentiveness, excellent coordination, quick reflexes and good memory. A medication that is sedating could affect any of these requirements and could therefore affect your driving.

Not all allergy medications are created equal. There are non-sedating alternatives available like Claritin that will relieve the sneezing and itching of the nose, eyes and throat while letting you perform to the maximum of your abilities.

## Safe Driving Tips For Allergy Sufferers

Here are some helpful safety tips from the allergy experts at Claritin that you can consider before you take the wheel:

Look for the words non-drowsy, or non-sedating on the package of your allergy medication. In other words, any other expression or word combination may be misleading. If you're not sure about what you're buying, ask your pharmacist to explain the different wording.

Avoid the misconception that certain stimulants like coffee will keep you alert over an extended time period. Coffee or other sources of caffeine are short-term stimulants only.

Avoid alcohol: even small amounts can affect your driving, especially if combined with certain medications.

For more information on how to control allergies this season call 1-800-665-1507 or visit

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### **Allergic To Your Dog Or Cat?**

**By Samuel Murray**

Pets definitely help us live longer and healthier lives. This is especially true of the elderly and those of us who live alone. Pets make wonderful and faithful companions. They are always there for us. However, this relationship can become strained, and sometimes even be broken when someone in the household develops an allergy to a beloved pet.

Studies show that approximately 15% of the population suffers from an allergy to a dog or cat, and

## Safe Driving Tips For Allergy Sufferers

about one third of those with an allergy to cats choose to live in a household with a cat despite the allergy. Some allergy sufferers live happily with a pet for a year or two before an allergy starts.

There are sometimes long term health ramifications of repeated allergy flair up's, especially for children. Repeated flair-up's can cause permanent lung damage in children. This should be carefully and thoroughly discussed with your physician. One of the ways to live happily with an animal you are allergic to is to decrease your exposure to the animal. Keep the animal outside if possible.

If the allergy sufferer only has a mild reaction to the animal there are ways for the two of them to live together in harmony, but it takes work. The animal should not be allowed in the allergy sufferers bedroom or on the bed. Keep the animal off of any upholstered furniture in the house as dander can be transferred to upholstered furniture. Use a room purifier to remove airborne animal dander. Remove carpets from the home if possible and replace with wood floors. Wash area rugs on a regular basis with warm water. Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter in order to trap dander. The allergy sufferer should wash his or her face and hands after handling the animal. The animal can be bathed weekly in specially formulated shampoo that removes dander.

In some cases where the above methods and the use of over the counter antihistamines and decongestants do not help, the allergy sufferer may need to seek the help of an allergist. Immunotherapy can be thought of like a vaccination against your allergies. Given on a regular basis as shots, immunotherapy helps your body build up a natural tolerance to specific allergens.

With the use of the above methods you'll be able to live a long and healthy life with your pet!

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