



Allergy Attack versus Medicine Head
Don't let seasonal allergies affect safety at work!

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Recent research at a heavy manufacturing plant proved four important things about seasonal allergies:

1. During their bad seasons, allergy sufferers have more work injuries, more Worker Compensation claims, less ability to concentrate and to work without mistakes, and rate their own work performance as being worse. Absenteeism, Worker Comp, and group health claims increase!
2. The worse their symptoms got, the worse these risks and impairments became.
3. And, when allergy sufferers used sedating antihistamines (allergy medicines that cause drowsiness), their impairment and their risks didn't improve.
4. **BUT**, when allergy sufferers used non-sedating medications, their work performance improved dramatically and was nearly as good as people who had no allergy. Their risk of work injury also dropped to normal!



It is nice when research matches common sense! If you have ever suffered from severe runny nose, watery eyes, and sneezing from allergies, then you know you can't work as effectively and safely as you'd like. And, if you ever had "medicine head" from taking antihistamines that made you drowsy, you also know that makes it hard to work, especially to work safely. But, if you use an allergy medicine that does not cause drowsiness, you remain alert, make fewer mistakes, and work safely and effectively.

So, the take home message is **"READ THE BOX!"** If you use an over-the-counter allergy medicine, read the warning label before you take it! If it says it may cause drowsiness, you should not take it and go to work within 6-12 hours, depending on the product. Find and use something else to keep allergy troubles away while you work, for the safety and you and your co-workers.

Certain over-the-counter medicines are great for working people. These include loratadine (Claritin type) and cetirizine (Zyrtec type). You can buy these over the counter, including inexpensive generic or "store brands." Ask your provider what's best for you. Your doctor could also prescribe various other allergy medicines if needed, which likewise do not cause drowsiness. More severe allergies may require these prescriptions.

And, remember to tell your doctor what you do at work. That helps your provider choose the best and safest medicine for you. Again, the key is finding the right medicine. If your allergies are anything more than minor, treating them improves your safety, but you need the right medicine to help you feel better AND work better.

Be safe! Stay happy! Don't fall victim to "***ALLERGY ATTACK****or* ***MEDICINE HEAD!***"