

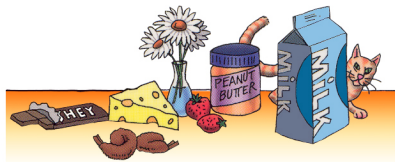


Ah Choo!

Many people have pets, like cats and dogs, and enjoy being around them. Other people are allergic to some animals and can't be near them. Some people, for example, get red eyes and a stuffy nose when they are near cat hair.



There are all sorts of things people can be allergic to. Sometimes, they don't even know it! These things are called "allergens." Pollen is an allergen, and it's all over!



Let's measure some pollen!

Here's all you need

- 3 or 4 white index cards or stiff white paper cut into 3" x 5" sheets
- a ballpoint pen
- petroleum jelly
- string
- a hand lens (optional)

Here's what to do:

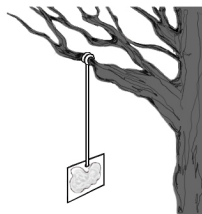
1. Use a pen to poke a hole at the top of each index card.
2. Cut several pieces of string about 2 feet long. Tie one end of each string to an index card.

3. Rub some petroleum jelly all over the plain side of the cards. Try to keep the jelly side of the cards as clean as possible.



4. Tie the cards to different things outside. Tie them to trees, a fence, a window, or near flowers -- just find places where the pollen catcher gets some outside air.

5. After two or three days, collect your pollen catchers and look at what they've caught.



Where did you put your pollen catchers? Which ones caught the most pollen? What else did you find on your pollen catchers?

Here's more about pollen:

Pollen comes from flowering plants. The pollen from one flower fertilizes another flower, so it can make seeds. Usually, pollen is a yellow powder, but it can also be orange, green, and other colors.

You often see pollen covering cars and windows. This pollen is usually from tiny flowers on some kinds of trees, weeds, or grasses. These plain little flowers rely on wind or rain to spread their pollen around. By making a lot of it, they can make sure some of the pollen makes it to other flowers. This is the pollen many people are allergic to. Ah choo!

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Funding provided by
National Science Foundation

