



HOLY FAMILY  
PARISH

## PARISH NURSE MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

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# Perfume Allergies

*"And Esther the queen seized with deadly anxiety, fled to the Lord; she took off her splendid apparel and costly perfumes..."*

— Esther: 4:14

*This article was requested by several parishioners who suffer ill effects from people in church who are highly sensitive to perfume scents of others, especially in both chapels, where there is close proximity to one another wearing heavy perfumes (this applies to both women and men). We think about food allergies a lot, and allergies like cat hair and dust, pollen and insects. We have so many more allergens floating around that though they may not be deadly, they sure can be annoying. The following article and experiences were written by a lady on the internet. Please consider those who may have severe allergies and medical repercussions, before you reach for that perfume bottle or after shave before going to mass.*

**P**erfume allergies are a huge annoyance to many people, simply because you can't get away. My mother is highly allergic to some perfumes, not all. It just depends on the scents used in them. There is a certain brand she really likes, and the other day, a sample came in the mail from this designer. Since she's had success with them before, she put the tiniest amount on her wrist. Then the headache came, the nausea and the sneezing, and shortness of breath.

One day I was off to a tennis match and my partner came to pick me up. Same experience, I had sprayed on a tester, something I normally didn't wear. The whole way to our match we were sniffing and my poor partner was coughing and eyes were watering. I didn't even have that much on. Not a great way to start a match. At least we were outside!

What about if you work with a perfume wearer? Can you ask them not to wear it? What if your child's teacher coats it on in the morning and your child is allergic? How about if you're sitting next to someone at church who is wafting the perfume or after shave scent around?



It's a hard matter to deal with, as perfume is personal and people usually don't think about infringing on another's well being when they put it on.

It's also hard to differentiate and say all perfume, or some heavier ones, or perhaps ones that contain rose or maybe verbena. It's not perfume in general that people are allergic to, it's the ingredients. So if you are allergic to cedar, a perfume with cedar fragrance in it may cause symptoms to flare up. Other perfumes may sit fine with you, but not well with the person or persons who are near you.

So how do you handle it? Learn from your mistakes is one – do not wear new or heavy perfume when in close quarters with someone, or even much perfume. You never know how someone will react. Please be aware of others around you who may have a severe reaction to your heavy perfume or after shave. Usually, if a person washes with plain soap and water, it will be enough to prevent body odors that you fear may offend others.

May you enjoy the beautiful colors of autumn and abundant foods of the Fall season. May God bless you and your family and friends.  
The Parish Nurse.