

FIGHT OFF ALLERGIES THIS SEASON!

Do you suffer from hay fever every spring? Are you plagued by a stuffy, runny nose, puffy, watery eyes, sneezing, and a sore throat? Are you fatigued and irritable?

Negative reports on prescription, over-the-counter anti-histamines and steroids have prompted many to seek safer, more natural alternatives to these commonly used allergy-suppressing drugs. Whether these drugs are swallowed, inhaled, or rubbed onto the skin, they have long-term deleterious effects on the immune system. Dependency is a common problem and these drugs do not really offer a cure.

Hay fever is caused by an overreaction of the immune system to a particular substance in the environment. It is not known exactly what causes the immune system to act so strongly, but the number of allergic responses is definitely on the rise, indicating environmental and lifestyle causes. Increased toxins in our food, air, and water have challenged the immune system. Also, stress (emotional, mental), and a diet of refined, processed, and packaged food weaken the immune system.

There are many ways to prevent and treat seasonal allergies naturally. Detoxification and elimination diets should be conducted in the springtime to cleanse the body of toxic load. Eliminate sugar, alcohol, preserved/packaged foods, and caffeine. Drink plenty of water and eat plenty of whole grains, fruits and vegetables. As your body clears itself of harmful toxins and chemicals, it strengthens the immune system and decreases inflammation (congestion, swelling) in the body.

Food sensitivities and underlying yeast/candida/fungus can also aggravate seasonal allergies. These need to be diagnosed and addressed by your naturopathic doctor. Yeast and fungal overgrowths in the sinuses are common causes of chronic sinusitis. Avoiding sugar, yeast, and alcohol gives the “yeast killers” a chance to clear up mucous membranes. “Yeast killers” include garlic, oregano oil, and grapefruit seed extract. Also, avoiding food sensitivities temporarily gives the immune system a break so that it can better deal with environmental stresses that your body is reacting to, like pollen, grasses, molds, etc.

There are many vitamins and herbs that act as natural anti-histamines. These include large doses of vitamin C, quercetin (a bioflavonoid found in onions, garlic, and grapes) and herbs such as stinging nettle. The key word here is dosages. Many people do not take enough of a vitamin to have a therapeutic effect. Or, the strength or quality of the vitamin might not be very effective. Vitamins that strengthen the immune system, such as Vitamins A, E, zinc, and selenium, should also be added. Also, omega-3 fatty acids, such as flax seeds and cold water fish (salmon, cod, halibut, haddock, pickerel) are beneficial at reducing inflammation (congestion, swelling, itchiness, hives) in the body. Also, high dosages of probiotics help balance intestinal health and enhance the immune system.

Don't suffer this season from seasonal allergies!! Act now to restore and improve your health!!