



It's spring and things are blooming! In the Santa Clara we are on track for a record high levels of tree pollen. The cars left outside will be dusted yellow with the stuff and even people who don't normally suffer much with allergies were sneezing, blowing their nose and wondering if they'd ever feel normal. While many of us just grit our teeth and get through allergy season, it's not something you really need to do. Use one or all of these simple, easy and affordable options to at least improve your quality of life.

Seasonal allergies are usually an allergy to pollen that is a result of an exposure during childhood that overwhelmed the immune system. Pollen contains proteins that, in small doses, the body doesn't pay much attention. At some point, however, a massive dose caused alarm bells in the immune system to generate antibodies and trigger an immune response. It only takes that happening once for you to have an immune response to the same protein for life—hence the runny nose, sneezing, itchy throat, etc. when pollen counts start to climb.

Allergies are your body's reaction to particles that it considers foreign (allergens). The first time your body encounters an allergen, your plasma cells release immunoglobulin E (IgE), an antibody specific to that allergen. IgE attaches to the surface of your mast cells, which are found in great numbers in your surface tissues, such as your skin and nasal mucous membranes, where they help mediate inflammatory responses. Mast cells release a number of important chemical mediators, one of which is histamine. The second time your body encounters a particular allergen, within a few minutes your mast cells become activated and release a powerful cocktail of histamine, leukotrienes, and prostaglandins, which trigger the entire cascade of symptoms you associate with allergies.

One of the marvels of the human body is that it can defend itself against harmful invaders such as viruses or bacteria. In some people, the body reacts to harmless substances such as dust, mold or pollen by producing an antibody called immunoglobulin E (IgE). When patients with one of the allergic diseases (such as rhinitis or asthma) are exposed to these substances, the immune system then rallies its defenses, launching a host of complex chemical weapons to attack and destroy the supposed enemy. In the process, some unpleasant and, in extreme cases, life-threatening symptoms may be experienced.

An allergic reaction may occur anywhere in the body, but usually appears in the skin, eyes, lining of the stomach, nose, sinuses, throat and lungs — places where special immune system cells are stationed to fight off invaders that are inhaled, swallowed or come in contact with the skin."

Allergies Need to Be Addressed Using a Multi-Prong Approach

Avoiding triggers can certainly be helpful, but to really address your allergies you need a multi-faceted approach that includes optimizing your diet utilizing the Advance Plan, intestinal health,

and vitamin D levels. An estimated 80 percent of your immune system is located in your gut, so supporting your digestive health is essential to also supporting your immune system, which is your primary defense system against all disease. Allergies are a sign that your immune system is in overdrive, and diet, gut health, and vitamin D are all important components that will help optimize your overall immune function. One common reason for an overactive immune system is "leaky gut" syndrome. If gaps develop between the cells (enterocytes) that make up the membrane lining your intestinal wall, it allows substances to pass through that really should be confined to your digestive tract. This includes undigested proteins, which can cause allergic reactions. Besides being associated with inflammatory bowel diseases like Crohn's and ulcerative colitis, or celiac disease, leaky gut can also be a contributing factor to allergies. Once the integrity of your intestinal lining is compromised, and there is a flow of toxic substances "leaking out" into your bloodstream, your body also experiences significant increases in inflammation, which places an increased workload on your immune system. SOLUTION: 50 B PROBIOTIC

Supplementing To Build Your Body

Probiotics

A recent review of more than 20 studies has concluded that taking probiotics and having a healthy microbiome (bacteria in your gut) lessens the effects of seasonal allergies. The logic is that considering allergies are an immune response and 80% of the cells responsible for immunity are in the gut, a healthy gut bacterium is going to help with allergies. A probiotic supplement can certainly help, but these generally only contain a few of the thousands of strains of bacteria that compose a healthy microbiome. It's recommended to eat fermented food, including kimchi, sauerkraut, kombucha, etc. SOLUTION: 50 B PROBIOTIC

Vitamin C

Vitamin C is another natural antihistamine. Allergens cause certain cells in the body to produce histamine, which is responsible for common seasonal complaints like tearing, excess mucus and a runny nose. Vitamin C prevents the formation of histamine, while typical over-the-counter antihistamine medications work by interfering with the histamine after it is produced. Vitamin C's immune-enhancing effect also makes it essential in preventing infection as well as in shortening the duration of an illness. It is recommended on should take 500 to 1,000 mg., three times a day to reduce symptoms."

Quercetin

Oh you never heard of this? It's a pigment that gives plants their color, but it's also a very powerful antioxidant. As far as allergies go, it's a very useful compound for regulating histamine,



which are released in droves during an allergic reaction. Quercetin slows down the production of histamine, which calms the allergic reaction. It's so powerful that it has even been found to be effective in calming the effects of a peanut allergy—and no doubt you've heard how powerful those reactions can be. Quercetin-rich foods (such as apples, berries, red grapes, red onions, capers and black tea) prevent histamine release — so they are "natural antihistamines." Quercetin is also available in supplement form — a typical dose for hay fever is between 200 and 400 milligrams (mg) per day. **SOLUTION: VITAMIN C COMPLETE WITH QUERCETIN**

Fish Oil

EPA/DHA fish oils Healthy types of oils are necessary for the formation of every cell in the body. Eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), the components of essential fatty acids, are natural anti-inflammatory agents and my favorite year-round supplement. Their anti-inflammatory action makes them useful in treating and preventing heart disease, and they also have beneficial effects on cholesterol, triglycerides and on the tendency of blood to clot. Essential fatty acids help to moisten the skin and improve bowel function. Symptoms of depression, ADD/ADHD, schizophrenia and memory loss may improve with essential fatty acid supplements. Finally, fish oils are also very useful for the treatment and prevention of skin conditions like eczema or psoriasis. One German study involving 568 people found that a high content of omega-3 fatty acids in red blood cells or in the diet was associated with a decreased risk of hay fever.

SOLUTION: PERFECT OMEGA Take 2,000 to 6,000 mg daily with meals (two or three capsules twice daily).

Vitamin D

If you have asthma and/or allergies, optimizing your vitamin D levels is absolutely crucial. In fact, research suggests that vitamin D deficiency may be a primary underlying cause of asthma. This means that many are needlessly suffering with a potentially life-threatening ailment, since vitamin D deficiency is easily remedied. Vitamin D will also help to upregulate your immune system. Ideally, you'll want to get your vitamin D from appropriate sun exposure. Beware that using sunscreen when outdoors effectively shields your skin from making any vitamin D. Another alternative is taking an oral vitamin D3 supplement. If you opt for a vitamin D supplement you also need to boost your vitamin K2. Whichever way you go, make sure to check your vitamin D levels at regular intervals to make sure you're within the therapeutic levels of 50-70 ng/ml.

SOLUTION: VITAMIN D WITH PROBIOTICS



Nasal Irrigation

Using a neti pot (a small, teapot-like pot) is a simple technique to safely cleanse your sinuses of irritants, including allergens. It involves pouring water into one nostril and allowing it to flow out the other. You can find detailed instructions for nasal irrigation here. Be sure to avoid using tap water, as it could potentially be contaminated with brain-eating amoeba or other contaminants. Only use water that is distilled, sterilized, previously boiled or filtered using a filter with an absolute pore size of 1 micron or smaller. Restore Sinus Spray is designed to help you cleanse, soothe, and hydrate the delicate membranes lining your nasal passages.

SOLUTION: RESTORE NASAL SPRAY Another option is to start your daily beauty and hygiene regimen by gently flushing your sinuses with Restore's proprietary blend of trace minerals suspended in purified water. It's the perfect rinse for the dust, pollen, and other airborne particulates and irritants we are exposed to in our daily environment.

Nutritional Solution: Avoid Foods That Cause A Leaky Gut

So, what causes leaky gut? The foods you eat play a paramount role, for obvious reasons.

Grains can damage your gut in a number of ways, for example. Not only do they contain anti-nutrients that may damage your gut, many are also highly contaminated with glyphosate which has been shown to wreak havoc on your intestinal health.

Glyphosate has been shown to severely damage your gut flora and cause chronic diseases rooted in gut dysfunction, and the use of glyphosate on wheat crops has risen in tandem with the rise in celiac disease.

Genetically engineered foods, which are pervasive in the American diet, also tend to be far more allergenic than conventional ones, by virtue of producing foreign proteins that have never existed in the human diet before. Research has found that junk food increases a child's risk of asthma and allergies, so certainly, avoiding processed foods in general can, at the very least, reduce your risk.

"Healing and sealing" your gut has been shown to help alleviate allergy symptoms, and the key to this is eliminating inflammatory foods like grains and processed foods and introduce healthier ones that will support a proper balance of bacteria in your gut. Traditionally fermented foods is one essential component of a gut-healthy diet, but trading out processed foods for whole, fresh (ideally organic) foods is also important.

Additionally, as it pertains to your diet, about one-third of seasonal allergy sufferers have something called "oral allergy syndrome,"³ in which your immune system is triggered by proteins



in some foods that are molecularly similar to pollen. Your immune system looks at the protein molecule and says, "Close enough!" and attacks it. If you are allergic to ragweed, for example, you may have cross-sensitivity to melons, bananas, tomatoes, zucchini, sunflower seeds, dandelions, chamomile, and Echinacea. If you have a grass allergy, you may also react to peaches, celery, tomatoes, melons, and oranges. If this applies to you, you'll want to avoid such foods.

Natural solutions

Raw local honey

As for using local honey, results tend to be mixed, but it could be worth trying—especially if you know what kind of pollen you're allergic to, so you can match it to the type of honey you buy. In one 2011 study, patients diagnosed with birch pollen allergy experienced significant relief when consuming honey daily from daily from November to March. During birch pollen season, compared to the control group, the patients using honey experienced a 60 percent reduction in symptoms; twice as many asymptomatic days; 70 percent fewer days with severe symptoms, and 50 percent decrease in usage of antihistamines.

While I believe there's truth to the anecdotal claims that local honey can help reduce allergy symptoms, it's important to be aware that honey itself can also trigger in some cases severe allergic reactions, including anaphylactic shock. So clearly you should not attempt to use honey if you've ever experienced an adverse reaction to honey in the past. Also be careful and use it sparingly in the beginning until you've confirmed that you can tolerate it. Another important point to remember is that honey is high in fructose. Typically, about 70-80 percent of honey is fructose, which in excessive amounts can exacerbate pre-existing insulin resistance and provoke metabolic dysfunction.

Honey made in your area by local bees is naturally made from the pollen that will no doubt wreak havoc on your immune system. If you eat about a tablespoon of the raw, unprocessed local honey made using the pollen in your area, you will ultimately build up a resistance to that pollen while boosting your overall immune system function with the therapeutic qualities of honey.

This has even been confirmed by one rather interesting scientific study. A 2011 study published in the International Archives of Allergy and Immunology Journal found that those taking a dose of raw local honey containing birch tree pollen "reported a 60 percent lower total symptom score, twice as many asymptomatic days, and 70 percent fewer days with severe symptoms." It works, and it's also delicious.

Apple Cider Vinegar

This old remedy is a great symptom reliever. It is long known to reduce mucous and drain the lymph system. Simply put about a tablespoon of organic ACV into a glass of lukewarm water and drink it three times a day and you'll notice you don't feel the effects of your seasonal allergies nearly as powerfully.

Hot Peppers

Hot chili peppers, horseradish, and hot mustards work as natural decongestants. In fact, a nasal spray containing capsaicin (derived from hot peppers) significantly reduced nasal allergy symptoms in a 2009 study.

Eucalyptus Oil

This pure essential oil can be healing to mucus membranes. You can apply a drop on a cotton ball and sniff it several times a day, add a few drops to water (or to a nebulizer, if you own one) for a steam treatment, or use a few drops in your bath water.

Other Survival Strategies for Surviving Spring Allergy Season

Limit Pollen Exposure

- Avoiding clothing made of synthetic fabrics, as they can produce an electric charge when rubbed that attracts and makes pollen stick to you. Better options include natural fibers like cotton.
- Exercising outdoors before dawn, in the late afternoon, and/or early evening, as pollen counts are at the lowest at these times. Intense exercise may be best done indoors, as your increased breathing rate could make you inhale more pollen.
- Wearing gloves and a mask when gardening. To filter pollen, wear a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)-rated 95 filter mask. Also avoid touching your eyes and when done be sure to take a shower and wash your clothes.
- Reducing your exposure to indoor allergens may also help reduce spring allergy symptoms. To improve your indoor air quality, regularly vacuum your home, including furniture, using a HEPA filter vacuum cleaner, leave shoes by the door to avoid trekking dirt through the house, and use a dehumidifier and/or a HEPA filter air purifier.



Diet, Exercise and Stress Relief

Many people aren't aware that lifestyle habits may influence your allergy symptoms. "Healing and sealing" your gut has been shown to help alleviate allergy symptoms, and the key to this is eliminating inflammatory foods like grains and processed foods and introducing healthier foods, including fermented foods, that will support a proper balance of bacteria in your gut.

Eating a wholesome diet based on unprocessed, ideally organic and/or locally grown foods, including fermented foods, along with optimizing your vitamin D levels and correcting your omega-3 to omega-6 ratio, will form the foundation upon which your immune system can function in an optimal manner.

Interestingly, while we're on the topic of diet, if you have tree pollen allergies, you should avoid avocados when the trees are pollinating to avoid exacerbating your symptoms. In the Huffington Post, Mike Tringale, senior vice president of External Affairs for the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), further explained the importance of a healthy lifestyle for fighting allergies

Exercise

An allergic disorder means you have a chronic disease of your immune system ... Exercise can bolster your immune system, which means it can be a helpful strategy when you're fighting your allergies. Immunotherapy [like allergy shots] increase your tolerance to a trigger, but your body will still produce antibodies to those allergens."

When you're healthy, your body will be able to tolerate more of the trigger before a reaction occurs. Even stress relief is important, as chronic stress weakens your immune system. Research shows that people with persistent emotional stress have more frequent allergy flare-ups, so be sure you're tending to your emotional health.