

Natural Allergy Fighters: 5 Things You Can Do Now to Combat Seasonal Allergies

by Casie Terry

<http://www.liveinthenow.com/article/top-5-all-natural-allergy-fighters>

Allergy season is right around the corner, but having allergies doesn't mean we need choose between OTC (Over The Counter) meds or falling victim to the face-swelling, mood-ruining impact of seasonal shifts every year. There are ways to combat seasonal allergies naturally, making it possible to avoid OTC medications altogether, once the natural ingredients kick in. The mistake so many of us make is waiting until allergy season is upon us, when our last resort for instant relief is an over-the-counter medication that contains dangerous ingredients and likely only provides temporary relief, at best. And if you, like me, are guilty of having done this, fear not. There are solutions for you to consider.

A Proactive Regimen to Fight Allergies — Start Now and You'll Thank Yourself Later...

As with most natural remedies, these ingredients can take anywhere from 2-4 weeks to build up in your system, so it's recommended you start your allergy prevention regimen as early as possible so that the ingredients have sufficient time to build up your defenses.

Here are five all natural allergy remedies to consider...Allergy Fighters...

1. **Quercetin:** While over-the-counter allergy meds work to block the effects of histamine once it is released, this powerful antioxidant blocks the release of histamine altogether, significantly reducing allergy symptoms. Additionally, quercetin has excellent anti-inflammatory properties. Typically, one should take quercetin consistently for 2 weeks before they feel the benefits. (Bonus: Quercetin stands to improve your endurance as well!) If you want to further increase the effects of quercetin, find a product that combines it with bromelain, a unique extract from pineapple. It is not totally understood how they work together, but it is likely due to the strong anti-inflammatory effects possessed by bromelain.

2. **Local Bee Pollen:** Visit your local health food store and stock up on this allergy fighter. You can take it by the spoonful or add it to foods. Since it's local, it will slowly introduce the pollen to your body and essentially desensitize you from the inside out. After a week or two, allergy symptoms should subside.

3. **Pine Bark:** One of the most studied pine bark extracts is the patented formula, Pycnogenol. Pycnogenol has powerful antioxidant properties and studies using Pycnogenol for allergy prevention have indicated that it can significantly reduce symptoms.

4. **Stinging Nettle Extract:** Naturopathic doctor and Live in the Now contributor, Dr. Kevin Passero, says that stinging nettle extract is "one of the most effective substances in the natural pharmacy for relieving allergy symptoms." It's best to start supplementation as early as possible for best results.

5. **Butterbur:** Butterbur has demonstrated some impressive results in many clinical trials and is reported to be as effective as leading OTC treatments at relieving the four biggest allergy symptoms: runny nose, itchy eyes, sneezing and nasal congestion.

10 Home Remedies for Allergies...

by Editors of Consumer Guide...Health | Home Remedies

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<http://health.howstuffworks.com/wellness/natural-medicine/home-remedies/10-home-remedies-for-allergies1.htm>

1. Use Saline Solution...

A saline solution can cleanse your nose and relieve nasal allergy symptoms. Irrigating the nose with saline solution (salt water) may help soothe upper respiratory allergies by removing irritants that become lodged in the nose and cause inflammation. In fact, saline solution may even wash away some of the inflammatory cells themselves. You can buy ready-made saline solution at your local drugstore, or you can make your own fresh solution daily by mixing a teaspoon of salt in a pint of warm, distilled water and adding a pinch of baking soda. Bend over a sink and sniff a bit of solution into one nostril at a time, allowing it to drain back out through the nose or mouth; do this once or twice a day. (If you also have asthma, however, check with your doctor before trying this remedy.)

2 Wash...

Hot showers can help rinse off pollen and open up your sinuses. If you've spent long hours outdoors during the pollen season, wash your hair to remove pollen after you come inside. The sticky yellow stuff tends to collect on the hair, making it more likely to fall into your eyes. If you wake up in the middle of the night with a coughing, sneezing allergy attack, a hot shower may wash off any pollen residues you've collected on your body throughout the day. (You might want to change your pillowcase, too.) It may also help open up your sinuses, at least for a while, making breathing a little easier. The warm water may even help you relax and go back to sleep. If your eyes are itchy and irritated and you have no access to allergy medicine, rinsing your eyes with cool, clean water may also help soothe them. Although not as effective as an antihistamine, this remedy certainly can't do any harm.

3. Beware of the Air...

Breathing polluted air can make your symptoms worse. Keep your windows closed on high-pollen and high-ozone days and avoid cigarette smoke. Breathing polluted air can make your symptoms worse. Keep your windows closed on high-pollen and high-ozone days and avoid cigarette smoke. Breathing polluted air can worsen symptoms. In fact, airborne toxins can actually cause allergies in some people. If you suspect that air pollution triggers your attacks, spend as little time outdoors as possible on smoggy days. When you must go outside, wear a surgical mask, especially while exercising. Don't expect miracles (the mask won't screen out all allergens) but it may help you breathe a little easier. Tobacco smoke is a notorious irritant, either causing or aggravating respiratory allergies. Don't let your friends and family foul the air with cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. And, of course, if you still light up, stop it! A fresh breeze blowing through an open window on a spring day may sound inviting, but it's bad news for an allergy sufferer, since it can fill the house with pollen. To minimize contact with the powdery stuff, keep windows closed at all times. Air purifiers, especially those with HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air Filters) filters, may help eliminate indoor pollen, but they also tend to stir up dust, which might worsen some allergies. On a windy day in pollen season, a pair of sunglasses (or your regular prescription eyeglasses, if you wear them) may also help shield your eyes from airborne allergens. For extra protection, try a pair of sunglasses with side shields or even a pair of goggles.

4. Drink Peppermint Tea...

Tea has been used for centuries as a remedy for nasal decongestion. However, use caution when giving peppermint tea to children. Tea has been used for centuries as a remedy for nasal decongestion. However, use caution when giving peppermint tea to children. Allergy sufferers throughout the centuries have turned to hot tea to provide relief for clogged-up noses and irritated mucous membranes, and one of the best for symptom relief is peppermint tea. Peppermint's benefits extend well beyond its delicious smell; the essential oil acts as a decongestant, and substances in peppermint contain anti-inflammatory and mild antibacterial constituents. To make peppermint tea: Place 1/2 ounce dried peppermint leaves in a 1-quart jar. Fill two-thirds of the jar with boiling water, and steep for five minutes. (You can inhale the steam for added benefit). Let cool, strain, sweeten if desired, and drink. (Note: Peppermint tea should be used with caution in children, as the menthol in peppermint may cause them to choke.)

5. Steam Your Face...

Steam can soothe your sinuses. Breathing steam refreshes and soothes irritated sinuses, and it helps rid the nasal passages of mucus. While it takes some time, it will make you feel wonderful! Boil several cups of water and pour into a big bowl (or a plugged sink). Lean carefully over the bowl, and drape a towel over your head. Breathe gently for 5 to 10 minutes. When you're finished breathing steam, use the water for a second purpose: Let the water cool until warm, saturate a washcloth, and hold the cloth on your sinuses (to the sides of your nose, below the eyes, and above the eyebrows).

6. Wash Your Pet...

If you have pet allergies, be sure to wash your pet frequently. A little-known trick for dog or cat owners who are allergic to fur: Bathe your pet frequently. Fido and Fifi produce allergy-causing substances in their sweat and saliva that gets on their fur. Fortunately, these allergens dissolve in water, so a warm bath can rinse away the problem. If you're a cat owner and can't imagine bathing your beloved feline for fear of being scratched near to death, take heart: Some cats (though a minority, to be sure) purr when bathed. If you start bathing your feline regularly when it's a kitten, chances are higher that clean-up time will be a harmonious experience. Wash your cat in warm water, with no soap, once every other week. In addition to bathing your pet, try to wash your hands soon after you've had direct contact with your furry friend.

7. Go Bare...

Hardwood floors improve the value of your home and reduce indoor allergens. Carpets are notorious for being a haven for dust mites (microscopic bugs that feed on the dead skin cells we constantly shed and whose droppings spur allergies in millions of people). Bare floors, vacuumed and damp-mopped frequently, will help keep your home's dust-mite population down (you can't get rid of them all). If you can't remove all the carpeting in your home, at least opt for bare floors (if necessary, use small, frequently laundered throw rugs) in your bedroom; studies show the bedroom harbors more dust mites than any other room in the home, and you probably spend about a third of your time there every day. When carpets can't be removed, keeping them as clean as possible will help you breathe a bit easier. But beware: Many vacuums blast small particles of dust back into the air, leaving behind plenty of allergens to keep you sneezing and wheezing. Use a vacuum that has a built-in HEPA filter or attach a filter to the exhaust port of your canister vac (uprights usually don't have an exhaust port). If dust really bothers you and you've got the money, consider investing in an industrial-strength vacuuming system. Some allergists recommend a brand called Nilfisk, which has an excellent filtering system and retails for about \$500. To find out whether such products are appropriate for you and where you can purchase filters or special vacuums, talk to your allergist.

8. Dehumidify...

Dehumidifiers remove excess moisture from the air to keep your home smelling fresh and feeling comfortable. Dehumidifiers remove excess moisture from the air to keep your home smelling fresh and feeling comfortable. Dust mites love a humid environment, which allows them to reproduce like crazy. Invest in a dehumidifier or use an air conditioner, which works equally well. A dehumidifier can also help prevent mold, another allergen, from growing (just be sure to follow the manufacturer's maintenance instructions). When cooking or showering, take advantage of the exhaust fan, another way to help keep humidity to a minimum.

9. Wasabi...

Snacking on green peas coated in wasabi can help relieve allergy symptoms. If you're a hay fever sufferer who also loves Japanese food, this remedy will please. Wasabi, that pale-green, fiery condiment served with many Japanese dishes, is a member of the horseradish family. Anyone who has taken too big a dollop of wasabi (or plain old horseradish) knows that it makes sinuses and tear ducts spring into action. That's because allyl isothiocyanate, a constituent in wasabi, promotes mucus flow. The tastiest way to get those allyl isothiocyanates is by slathering horseradish on your sandwich or plopping wasabi onto your favorite sushi. Another option -- although harder to swallow -- is to purchase grated horseradish, and take 1/4 teaspoon to alleviate allergy symptoms.

10. Avoid the Culprit...

Grass allergies? You have an excuse to let someone else cut the yard. Sometimes, the best way to reduce the discomfort of an allergy is to avoid exposure to the allergen as much as possible. If you are allergic to cats, for example, avoid visiting the homes of friends who own them. If you must be around a cat, make the visit as short as possible, avoid touching or picking up the animal, and wash your hands when you leave. Although in some areas it is common to burn household and construction refuse, this may not be such a wise idea. The smoke from burning wood that has been treated with heavy metals or other chemical-laden materials can make anyone gag, but people with allergies or asthma have ultrasensitive respiratory systems, making them even more vulnerable. Also, think twice about any material you burn in the fireplace. Of course, your best bet is to stay away from the fireplace altogether when it's in use. During pollen season, a grass-allergic person is also better off letting someone else, anyone else, mow the lawn. Call your local county extension service and find out when the pollination season occurs in your area, then arrange for a lawn-care company, friend, or relative to cut your grass during that time. (As a rule of thumb, in many parts of the country, people who are allergic to grass should avoid mowing between May and the Fourth of July.)

PS from FactorReady.com: Per above suggestions these type natural products may be found at most health outlets such as: Quercetin Complex at amazon (from stopagingnow.com), Pine Bark Extract at amazon (from Now Foods), Butterbur Extract at amazon (from Swanson Superior Herbs), Organic Nettle Extract Powder at amazon (from Vita.Jing), etc. You can also do a computer search for more natural sinus remedies and find various other potential home remedies to acquire or make up. We suggest all to try the Rootology Breath Free, a natural and affordable dry capsule formula of 13 herbal extracts for nasal and sinus support available from amazon and various other health outlets. Many have also reportedly found relief with the patented Sinus Cleanser liquid formula from amazon (by AEN). This unique homeopathic product contains Baptisia tinctoria (wild indigo), salt water, colloidal silver, grapefruit seed extract, oregano, benzalkonium chloride (preservative) (min. required by FDA). It was formulated by Dr. Patrick Quillin, PhD, RD, CNS, who has over 35 years experience in clinical

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nutrition. Over 40 million Americans suffer from chronic sinus problems. Common prescription and over-the-counter drugs to address this problem include Claritin, Flonase, Sudafed, and others. Drugs try to slow down the flow of mucus (anti-secretory), kill the bacteria (antibiotics), or shut down the swelling (anti-inflammatory). While each strategy gives some temporary relief, none of these drug approaches reportedly deals with the underlying problem. Most sinus remedies try to subdue the symptoms of a fungal overload in the sinuses. The real problem is usually a fungal infection, as reported in the Mayo Clinic Proceedings, in September of 1999, which the Sinus Cleanser product can serve to address. Should you wish to look into an air purifier, one very affordable unit we tend to like is the O-Ion B-1000 filter/ionizer with UV-C sanitizer from amazon. Both the filter and collector rod are washable and would therefore rarely call for any replacement costs, although these parts are available if needed at modest cost. Each unit can reportedly handle up to a 1000 sq. ft. area. Be sure and visit our web site at FactorReady.com and review our Health tab general article as well as specific pdf articles under the Downloads tab. Stay Well, Stay Prepared and Stay Prayed Up!

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