

**FREE**

YOUR GUIDE TO DRUG-FREE  
**SINUS &  
ALLERGY**  
**RELIEF**



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An allergy is an adverse reaction to a substance that is harmless to most of the population. Symptoms from allergies are many and varied. A reaction can be so severe that it is life threatening or it can result in a minor rash, sinus problem or other minor symptom.

Allergies are the sixth leading cause of chronic disease in the United States, costing the health care system \$18 billion each year (compared to \$6 billion spent in 2000). Between 9% and 15% of all Americans have hay fever. In general, allergies are on the rise. More than 50 million Americans suffer with allergies and nearly 55% of Americans test positive for one or more allergens. Research appearing in the August, 2005 issue of the *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology* found that of 10,500 subjects tested, more than 50% were sensitive to at least one of ten common allergens. This is double the percentage of individuals

tested for allergies 30 years ago.

Medical treatment of allergies is directed at symptoms, but it may undermine the general health and make the underlying cause of the allergy worse. Nasal sprays, for example, irritate the mucus membranes. They actually create the problem that they are designed to solve. Side-effects of the common antihistamines include fatigue, dry mouth and headaches.

### **Science, Allergies and Natural Health**

It is a good idea to reconcile scientific research with natural health approaches. It is sometimes a difficult task. All of the medical journals sell ads to drug companies and it should be obvious that economics help to determine what appears in the journals. But occasional natural health gems appear; they are usually small studies that can still be branded as “inconclusive”. The overall

attitude of the journals seems to be, “My, isn’t this amusing. We will have to look into it *someday*.” But as long as drugs like Ritalin make \$3 billion per year and are advertised in the journal, you will not see the journal take a stand and suggest that kids with ADD need B vitamins, omega-3 oils, exercise and to stop eating junk food. They will, however, print the occasional amusing little study. One such study, appearing in the journal, *Annals of Allergy*, May 1994 evaluated 26 children with ADHD. The children were put on an allergy elimination diet. Along with eliminating artificial colors and preservatives, some foods were eliminated. These included common allergens like wheat, dairy products, egg, corn, yeast, soy, citrus, chocolate and peanuts. Of the 26 subjects, 19 responded well to the diet. It is a small study, but it should offer hope to people with ADD.

Studies supporting the use of natural health care for

allergies exist. Scientists in Finland have found that the type of fats consumed in the diet may be connected to the tendency toward allergy, according to research published in the journal *Allergy* (2001;56:425-428). The *British Medical Journal* (January 19, 2002; 324:144) has research that shows the herb, butterbur may be useful for allergic symptoms. There is even a journal article about homeopathy and allergies. In a small study, published in the August 19, 2000 issue of the *British Medical Journal*, 24 patients were given a homeopathic remedy daily and 27 patients received a placebo. Although it was a small group, the study was double-blind, placebo-controlled and randomized.

The information found in medical journals is interesting, but it does not give the practitioner information that is good enough to effectively treat airborne allergies. The doctor who is a real scientist, and who wants

to make his or her patients better will make note of the journal research, but also look at what patients respond to and take into account seemingly unrelated research. For instance, we know that eating sugar and producing insulin exacerbates inflammation. The symptoms of hay fever are largely due to inflammatory chemicals produced by the body, so it stands to reason that refined sugar is something that should be avoided by patients with hay fever. The same thing goes for trans fats. Yet this advice is seldom given in traditional medical offices; they are waiting for the perfect study to prove this (perhaps prompting Nasonex to pull its ads).

A real scientist will take the journal articles into account, but also take clinical and anecdotal information into account. He or she will look at known chemistry and physiology. Although the journals scorn anecdotal information, some of the most clinically useful

information comes to us anecdotally. And why not use anecdotal information if you are dealing with a very low risk therapy like nutrition that potentially can produce good results—especially if a doctor who you respect is using it and getting results (anecdotally)?

Hormones produced by the adrenal glands fight inflammation. Indeed, adrenal support is a mainstay for natural health practitioners to treat allergies. You don't see a lot of articles in medical journals about nutrient support for adrenals. There is some information about herbs and vitamin C in the journals. Bioflavonoids, like quercetin are often very useful for hay fever patients. Many herbs are also useful. But it is hard to put together an effective therapy using just the journal articles.

So when treating a patient with hay fever products for adrenal support, and herbal products designed to reduce histamine, are

very effective especially when given with a diet that is free of refined sugar, hydrogenated oil and chemical additives. Other useful products are bioflavonoids and fish oil. A few thousand IU of vitamin A per day for a couple of weeks works wonders if the patient's eyes itch. You can really fly without a net and use manipulative therapy or acupuncture. We are still waiting for the definitive double-blind placebo-controlled study to prove that this works, but in the mean time patients who are getting better don't seem to mind about the status of the research.

Most medical treatment of allergies is directed toward the symptoms. This is a good approach if the symptoms are life-threatening. If the symptoms are chronic, it is better to find the underlying cause of the allergy. Even patients with severe reactions who take medication will do better if the *underlying cause* of their allergic symptoms is addressed.

Many of the symptomatic treatments actually undermine health and can make the underlying cause of the allergy worse. Nasal sprays, for example, irritate the mucus membranes. The membranes swell and produce more mucus as a response to the irritation of the spray. They actually create the problem that they are designed to solve.

Steroid medications, while giving symptomatic relief, deplete the adrenal glands. Ironically, good adrenal function is necessary to overcome allergies.

The commonly used antihistamines like cetirizine (eg. Zyrtec), desloratadine (eg. Clarinex), and loratadine (eg. Claratin) do not have the extreme side effects of steroids. Fatigue and dry mouth are common side effects of these drugs. Loratadine may also produce headaches. Desloratadine and loratadine (in very high doses) have produced tumors in mice. Research

published in *Science News* (1994;145:324) raises the question of whether the antihistamines we take for allergies be linked to cancer. Studies in mice have shown that antihistamines promote the growth of malignant tumors. Scientists at the University of Manitoba believe that the consumption of various medications, including antihistamines and antidepressants, may increase the risk for cancer. In February, 1994, the Department of Health and Human Services noted an increase in the incidence of cancer in the United States. Scientists at the University of Manitoba believe that the consumption of various medications, including antihistamines and antidepressants, may increase the risk for cancer and may be part of the reason for the increase. They have demonstrated that drugs like Elavil, Claritin, Hismanal, Atarax, Unisom, Prozac, NyQuil and Reactine have all created tumors in animal

studies. Some antihistamines behave like the drug DPPE, which has been linked to enhancing tumor growth. By binding to histamine receptors, which interferes with enzymes designed to detoxify and remove poisons from the body. This will also interfere with the system that regulates cell growth. The drugs do not necessarily cause cancer, but can enhance the growth of cancer.

While offering relief, these drugs do not, however, address the underlying cause of the allergy. Even if you believe the relief is worth the risk and side-effects, it is best to treat the cause.

## **ALLERGIES: WHAT IS THE UNDERLYING CAUSE?**

### ***Adrenal function:***

The adrenal glands produce hormones that enable the body to keep inflammation in check (many of the symptoms of allergies are from inflammation). The steroid drugs used to quell a severe allergic response

are similar to the hormones produced by your adrenal gland.

The adrenal glands are directly affected by stress. They are responsible for the "fight or flight" response. Hans Selye, MD, conducted some experiments creating stress in rats. The rats were made to tread water with their legs tied until they became exhausted and died. He found that the adrenal glands responded to stress in three distinct stages. In the initial stage (the alarm reaction), the adrenal glands enlarge and the blood supply to them increases. As the stress continues (the resistance phase), the glands are large and functioning well. Eventually, if the stress continues, the glands reach the third stage, which is adrenal exhaustion.

The physiological changes brought on by the adrenal glands during stress is called the fight or flight response. Many people in modern society do not

have the luxury of a recovery period for their overworked adrenal glands. Stress is constant. The changes caused by the overproduction of adrenal hormones stay with them. The stimulation of the adrenal glands causes a decrease in the immune system function, so an individual under constant stress will tend to catch colds and have other immune system problems, including allergies.

People with weak adrenal glands frequently crave coffee and sugar, as well as salt. Sugar and caffeine stimulate the adrenal glands. It's as if your adrenal glands are two horses towing a wagon load of bricks up a mountain. Sugar or caffeine is the whip you use to get the horses to keep trying. What they need to get to the top of the mountain is nourishment and a rest period.

To effectively treat the adrenal glands, you must eliminate as much stress from your life as possible.

Situations are not always controllable, but stress is. Stress is cumulative. Emotional, structural and chemical stresses all affect the body the same way. Your adrenal glands do not know the difference between an IRS audit, treading water, extremes in temperature or excessive sugar consumption. Excess sugar consumption will add to the stress of the IRS audit.

Eating sugar and skipping meals are two things that are especially stressful to the adrenal glands, which work to maintain your blood sugar level. Eating sugar causes a temporary increase in blood sugar, which soon drops. Skipping meals also causes the blood sugar to drop. The adrenal glands then have to work to increase the blood sugar. Hypoadrenia and hypoglycemia usually exist together.

### ***The digestive system:***

Some believe that there is a connection between poor digestion and

allergies. If there is not enough hydrochloric acid produced in the stomach, or if there is inappropriate microbes (like yeast) growing in the GI tract, the immune system may be overworked. Incomplete digestion creates large molecules that sometimes trigger immune system response, creating allergies. It is just an idea that is held by many natural health care physicians, and it needs more research. However, many allergy sufferers improve when the digestive system is treated.

### ***The nervous system:***

Nerves control the entire body. This control extends to the adrenal glands, digestion and other areas that may influence allergies. A chiropractor is in reality, a doctor of the nervous system. Balancing the nervous system with chiropractic manipulation can solve many health problems, including allergies, by treating the source of the problem.

### **CAN A GOOD FOOD BE BAD FOR YOU?**

Sometimes eating whole foods and following a good diet is not enough to achieve good health. It may be necessary to take your wellness program a bit farther by finding foods to which you are sensitive and eliminating them from your diet.

You can be sensitive to a food that you crave. Sugar cravings, the desire for junk food and the inability to lose weight can be the result of hidden food sensitivities. This is very different from the familiar kind of food allergies. People commonly think of an allergic reaction as being immediate and severe, like breaking out in hives from eating strawberries.

Hidden allergies and sensitivities don't usually have a sudden and obvious reaction. The reaction to the offending food can take as long as 72 hours. People with this type of allergy often have a chronic health problem that they can't link to any

particular food. Sinus problems, digestive problems, eczema, headaches and obesity are examples of the health problems that can be caused by hidden allergies.

### **The Addictive “Allergy”**

This concept is based on the ideas of Theron Randolph, MD. Dr. Randolph looked at food sensitivities in an entirely new way. Here are some of his ideas.

- A person can take up to 72 hours to react to an offending food.
- Food sensitivities can cause symptoms of chronic conditions and seem to have nothing to do with consuming the offending food. Symptoms like migraine headaches, sinusitis, eczema, digestive problems, asthma, and obesity are examples of the problems caused by hidden food allergies.
- People with food sensitivities are commonly addicted to the food that is causing their health problem.

Commonly, when the offending food is avoided,

the individual's symptoms become worse initially. Symptoms usually flare up for 4 or 5 days, but this reaction can last longer. After the reaction passes the individual will feel much better—chronic symptoms disappear, energy increases and excess weight begins to come off.

### **Avoidance Is Not the Only Way to Bring Hidden Allergies under Control**

There are many well-documented cases of people who have been exposed to chemicals and developed many sensitivities. Physicians using natural health care are well aware of the fact that these patients respond to vitamin therapy. Vitamin C can reduce histamine levels. Trace minerals can support the liver in its effort to get rid of toxins. Supporting the adrenal gland and improving digestion are also useful strategies for bringing allergies under control.

In his book, *Brain Allergies: The Psychonutrient*

*Connection Including Brain Allergies Today* (Keats Publishing, 1988), Dr. William Philpott has some case histories of patients with mental problems who, by removing food allergens from their diet, experienced great improvement in their psychological symptoms. Many of the patients could tolerate their allergic foods after vitamin supplementation.

Need help dealing with environmental or food allergies and sensitivities? Feeling lousy and you don't know why? Paul G. Varnas, DC, DACBN has a novel approach to the management of these conditions incorporating nutrition, homeopathy and mind-body techniques.

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and schedule your  
FREE evaluation today.**



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