

An Increasing Trend in Allergies & Asthma

According to the latest statistics, the rates of allergies and asthma have skyrocketed in the past 40 years, for reasons that have been frustratingly unclear. Springtime in the air for people with allergies normally sends you scuttling for your box of tissues. Well, you are not alone, because each year, millions of Americans search for relief from seasonal allergy symptoms that accompany the new growth in the spring. Pollens, molds, grasses, and budding tree growth are customary culprits, contributing to the classic presentation of hay fever—itchy, watery eyes, runny nose, sneezing, and sinus congestion with pressure and/or pain. For numerous sufferers, springtime gratification such as gardening and hiking can provoke persistent allergic reactions that interfere with daily activities such as work, school and a restful sleep.

The Autoimmune Connection

Allergies can be linked to autoimmune diseases. Elimination diets or blood tests may establish food hypersensitivities. While never proven by official research, approximately 10% of the sufferers from joint inflammation find their symptoms diminished to some extent when they eliminate foods from the nightshade family, including peppers, tomatoes, potatoes, eggplant, paprika and tobacco (cigarette smoking is an absolute no-no). Eradicating sugar, white flour, caffeine, dairy products, citrus fruits and alcohol, and cutting down—if not eliminating—red meat also assists numerous people to reduce the ravaging effects of autoimmune diseases.

Autoimmune conditions may be generated by delayed food sensitivities that cause leaky gut syndrome (or intestinal absorbability problems), whereby undigested food particles are able to find their way into the bloodstream. Once in the blood, the particles are dumped into other body tissues where the immune system attempts to purge them and inflammation incurs. A healthy intestinal lining is impervious to antigens and toxins, however, if the lining of the gut is weakened the immune defenses have to work overtime to deny entry to invaders. Quite simple, a leaky gut allows invaders to journey where they are not welcome, which in turn will set off an autoimmune response.

Studies are under way to establish the relationship between allergies and autoimmunity. If you are stricken with an autoimmune disorder, allergy testing or eliminating suspect foods can facilitate getting your symptoms under control.

Allergy Detection: The Common & Often Unnoticed Symptoms

It is simple to detect an allergy that presents itself swiftly and clearly in the form of a runny nose and itchy eyes as a consequence of exposure to a certain agent such as cats or peanuts. It is extremely difficult to find out the allergy that has ambiguous symptoms or takes hours to show its effects. Symptoms may be severe or mild and can include:

- Mood Swings
- Bed-Wetting in Children
- Poor Memory or Fogginess
- Dark Circles Under the Eyes
- Red-Rimmed or Swollen Watery Eyes
- Red / Burning Ears
- Fatigue
- Joint and Muscle Pain
- Extreme Salivation
- Runny Nose
- Constant Nose Rubbing (A number of people with allergies have a crease just above the bulb of the nose from excessive rubbing, or one nostril will be stretched in the direction of the rub)
- Inflamed Tonsils and Recurrent Throat Infections
- Skin Rashes & Eczema
- Diarrhea, Gas, Constipation, Nausea, Bloating Stomach, Heartburn and Stomachaches
- Excessive Sweating
- Headaches & Dizziness

The Abuse of OTC Drugs and Antibiotics

Most of us in the alternative medicine arena know that allergy medicine is a huge business, with an immense array of non-prescription over-the-counter products to address nearly any complaint. Bear in mind, however, that they are not appropriate for all patients. In addition to their side-effects such as sedation or nerve reaction, allergy and sinus medications could be incompatible with certain prescription treatments and the chronic health conditions they treat, including high blood pressure, asthma, glaucoma, prostate problems, anxiety, and attention deficit disorder. Even in the best case scenario, allergy medicines could generate detrimental side effects that limit their use on a regular basis.

A recent study from the University of Michigan Medical School might have unearthed a clue. Now it turns out that the rise of another phenomenon—the use of antibiotics—may hold the answer. The University researchers found that antibiotics seem to prime the immune system to over-react to substances it could just as well ignore.

When the research team gave laboratory mice a five-day course of antibiotics, the animals showed the same effect seen in humans; an upset in the balance of yeast and other microbes in the gut. They then exposed the mice to several common allergens. The mice given antibiotics were hypersensitive to them, while the other mice had a normal immune response.

In the past, we have always thought of allergies and asthma as involving mainly the respiratory system. This research, however, suggests the microbes in the gut play a significant role. The results support a theory that our modern society is too sanitary. According to the results that support the “hygiene hypothesis”, when you are not exposed to very many bugs, your immune system has a hard time differentiating between a harmless substance (such as pollen) and a dangerous toxin, so it is likely to overreact.

A growing number of holistically minded people are seeking natural alternatives to the traditional drugstore offerings. With their temperate actions and minimal side effects, botanical and alternative remedies are a good option for many a sufferer. In contrast to a trip to a big chain drugstore, the preparation of natural remedies is more similar to a craft than a chore, calling to us to slow our tempo, reflecting on the beauty and usefulness of nature’s wealth.

Nasal Congestion

Nasal congestion combined with pressure and pain is characteristic of seasonal allergy, an impediment in the body’s defense plan. In a “best case scenario” situation, the immune system implements a simple yet inventive strategy to expel offensive allergens—immobilizing pollen grains, mold spores, dust mites, and similar maladies by coating them with layers of mucous. When you cough, sneeze or blow your nose, it clears the congested corridors of mucous buildup, carrying away trapped allergens in the process. Although all of the above is very inconvenient and annoying, these are all signs that an immune response is in progress.

Anaphylactic Reaction

The most lethal reaction happens when the allergen gets into the bloodstream and generates anaphylaxis, characterized by respiratory distress, fainting, itching, hives and often shock. The following matter is normally responsible for anaphylactic reactions:

- Venoms: wasps, bees, hornets
- Medications: hormones (insulin, parathormone), antibiotics (pencillin)
- Vaccinations: tetanus, diphtheria
- Foods: citrus fruits, mangoes, strawberries, nuts (Brazil, cashew), legumes (soybean, peanut), shellfish, chocolate

Would you believe that the very first recorded anaphylactic reaction to an insect is recorded in the hieroglyphics of King Menes of Egypt 4,000 years ago? The word anaphylaxis is derived from the Greek meaning “anti-protection,” and was thought up by two French biologists, Portier and Richet. They studied whether the exposure of dogs to sea anemone toxins would safeguard them from the harsh reactions generated by the injection of anemone venom. To their astonishment, the dogs died within 30 minutes of exposure to the venom after being sensitized to the poison.

This acute type of reaction frequently happens on the second exposure to the substance, not the first. Insect stings, (in particular bee stings, wasps and hornets) in addition to an allergy to penicillin, are the chief causes of anaphylactic reactions. Numerous people die every year as a consequence of penicillin-produced anaphylaxis. Whatever the allergen, anaphylaxis is a critical situation, and treatment in the form of an injection of epinephrine (adrenaline) can battle the symptoms, enlarging airways and keep you from dying.

Environmental Triggers

Your home is a busy place. People are constantly working, cooking, playing, cleaning, washing and moving things around. That kind of activity is completely normal, but it can generate small particles and chemicals that accumulate in the air you breathe. Whether your home is large or small, old or new, the interior air could be causing breathing problems, in particular for people with allergies and asthma.

There are simple things that you can put in place to clean up the air inside your home, so that everyone can breathe easier. If you have allergies or asthma, you are sensitive to particular “triggers”. These “triggers” can ignite a reaction in your lungs and other parts of your body. Triggers may be found indoors and outdoors. They may be simple things like:

- Illnesses—colds and influenza
- Tobacco smoke and wood smoke from the fireplace
- Allergens such as dust mites, cockroaches, pollen, molds, animal dander, tiny scales or particles from hair, feathers, or dead skin cells and saliva from pets
- Perfumes, paint, hair spray, or any other strong odors or fumes

It is important to identify your triggers. This isn't always easy, so you should experiment by staying away from one suspected trigger at a time. You can tell if it is a problem if you see improvement when it is removed. It is much more difficult to control your triggers outdoors. So, if the air pollution and pollen levels are high, it is an excellent idea to stay indoors. The air in your home is easier for you to control. In some cases, people with asthma and allergies become aware that their symptoms deteriorate at night. Controlling triggers in the bedroom is the best place to start.

There are air cleaning machines that you may purchase that can eradicate some of the triggers in your home. Unfortunately, they will not remove them all. Some air cleaners utilize an electrical charge that makes ozone, which many manufacturers claim will “purify” the air. Sadly, ozone irritates the lungs, and is a particular problem for people with asthma. The American Lung Association does not recommend the use of air cleaners that produce ozone, and is printed in their brochure, “Facts about home control of allergies and asthma.” They advise that you look for a mechanical air cleaner with a HEPA, or preferably a hyper-HEPA filter, that does not produce ozone and can efficiently trap large and small particles. Please see our recommendation on air cleaners.

Asthma

Asthma is an immunological disease that makes it difficult to breathe. The bronchioles in the lungs are restricted by inflammation and spasms in the lining of the airway wall. The disease affects more than 20 million Americans, according to the National Institutes of Health. Asthma has become a contemporary epidemic where approximately 4,500 deaths were credited to asthma in 2000, with 2 million emergency room stays and \$12 billion costs in the United States annually.

Akin to heart disease and other recurring illnesses, the underlying disease may evolve over the years, with few, if any, acute symptoms. As the condition advances, acute attacks with diminished ability to breathe are more and more possible. Chronic mild bronchitis, emphysema, and assorted lung problems are hard to distinguish from asthma, and even heart disease may cause breathing difficulties. When heart disease and asthma take place at the same time, it only complicates the diagnosis.

The common symptoms of asthma include:

- Difficulty in breathing,
- Coughing
- Wheezing, and use of accessory muscles to facilitate breathing
- Apprehension
- Fast heart rate (up to 120 beats a minute)
- Flared nostrils and increased symptoms of respiratory distress
- Poor exercise tolerance

Serious attacks include a feeling of tightness in the chest with thick and tenacious production of mucus.

An attack can last for a few minutes or several hours. The spasms characterizing an acute attack are not the cause of the disorder, but a result of chronic inflammation and hypersensitivity of the airways to certain stimuli. Asthma occurs most frequently in children and young adults, and fortunately, 50 to 70% of children out-grow the disease. Asthma is the most common cause of school absence and hospital admission in children.

Whether you smoke or not, these days, the health of our lungs is constantly under attack. Pollutants in the air, secondhand smoke and chronic respiratory allergies, perhaps related to environmental and psychological stressors, all equal peril for the bodily function that provides the breath of life.

There are two forms of asthma: allergic (extrinsic) and nonallergic (intrinsic), although the two often occur together.

- Common asthma-provoking allergens include:
- Animal dander
- Chemicals
- Drugs
- Dust mites
- Environmental pollutants
- Feathers
- Food additives (such as sulfites and MSG)
- Fumes
- Mold
- Tobacco smoke

Factors that can trigger nonallergic asthma attacks include:

- Adrenal disorders
- Anxiety
- Temperature changes
- Exercise
- Extremes of dryness or humidity
- Fear
- Low blood sugar
- Stress
- Respiratory infection, such as bronchitis
- And, yes, even laughing

Certain foods can trigger an asthmatic attack, particularly in children. Cow's milk, yeast, cheese, fish, nuts, chocolate, wheat, eggs, shellfish, tomatoes, and other foods of the nightshade family (for example, eggplants and potatoes) are potential offenders.

Modern medicine recommends a plethora of drug treatments, including anti-inflammatories and bronchodilators. The anti-inflammatory agents may stop the inflammation for a while and diminish symptoms quickly, but they have side effects—particularly when used for years. Prescription drugs have negative side effects and can be dangerous with long-term use. Since corticosteroids and inhalers equally stimulate the sympathetic nervous system, and therefore the “flight-or-fight” syndrome, they can generate nervousness, anxiety, insomnia, and dry mouth. Here are just a few other drugs and their potential side effects:

- **Generic name:** Flunisolide
- **Brand names:** Bronalide, Aerobid-M, Nasalide, Rhinalar
- **Side effects:** nasal burning and stinging, aftertaste, hoarseness, sore throat, cough, wheezing, Candida infections, change or loss of sense of smell or taste, nausea, headache, diarrhea, allergic reaction (including rash, hives, itchiness and bronchospasm)
- **Long term use:** permanent loss of smell and/or taste

- **Generic name:** Budesonide
- **Brand names:** Pulmicort, Rhinocort
- **Side effects:** facial edema, herpes simplex, nervousness, nausea, nasal irritation, dry mouth, hoarseness, wheezing, nasal pain, delayed growth in children.
- **Long term use:** glucose intolerance, psychiatric disturbances and cataracts.

- **Generic name:** Beclomethasone
- **Brand names:** Beclovent, Vanceril, Becloforte, Beconaise
- **Side effects:** irritation of the throat, coughing, hoarseness, candidiasis in the region of the oropharynx or the larynx.
- **Long terms use:** depressed pituitary-adrenal functioning, osteoporosis

Unfortunately, asthmatics and allergy sufferers are not aware of the many published studies showing that nutrient supplements and herbs induce a reduction in the incidence and severity of asthmatic and allergy attacks.

If your goal is to engage in a natural program and for it to be effective, asthmatics must limit or eliminate any food that can speed up metabolism and trigger increased inflammation.

Dietary Considerations

Our stomachs are packed full but our nutrient intake is poor. You can effortlessly change your diet—it is something you have influence over. Defeating or preventing allergies is as easy as selecting the correct foods to reinforce your immune system. Include the foods that are healthy and eliminate as many of the immune-damaging foods that you can, and within a month or two, you will

look and feel different.

Fruits and vegetables should be eaten in their whole form whenever possible—for instance, the whole apple in contrast to apple juice, and flaxseed in addition to flaxseed oil. Nature has manufactured each food to contain numerous critical components, and we are only starting to comprehend the power of consuming foods in their raw, whole form. New phytonutrients are being unearthed regularly and we may never truly comprehend all of the healing properties located in raw foods.

Whenever you can, try and purchase organic fruits and vegetables. Several studies that have compared organic to commercial produce discovered that commercially grown fruits and vegetables were nutrient deprived compared to organic produce. Additionally, commercial produce had higher amounts of heavy metals than the organic produce, which is to be expected when pesticides and commercial fertilizers are used to enhance their growth. The elements essential to human health that we obtain from whole, fresh food include: 20 minerals, 13 vitamins, 11 essential amino acids and 2 essential fatty acids. When they are absent from the human diet, the immune system weakens and health deteriorates. Eat healing foods to boost your immune system, and try to include as many of them as possible on a daily basis. To keep your immune system in ultimate condition, you must consume 7-10 half cup servings of fruits and/or vegetables every day.

The reality is that 90% of us don't consume the necessary fruits and vegetables!! So, for those of you who find it too difficult to do so on a regular basis, there is an interesting alternative. JuicePlus+, is a food concentrate in capsule form that contains flash-dried nutritional compounds found in seventeen raw fruits and vegetables, all the natural vitamins, nutrients, and fiber. In addition, it is the most researched encapsulated dietary supplement in the world. It is simply a way to get a healthy dose of the daily nutrition you need from fresh fruits and vegetables in a convenient form. Bear in mind that this is a complement to an already healthy lifestyle—not a substitute.

It is also helpful to eat foods that are rich in fiber and active-cultured (active being the key word) yogurts that are low in refined carbs and sugar. It is actually a good idea to be taking these things even if you are not on antibiotics. If you should be taking an antibiotic, please make sure that you take an excellent probiotic for at least ten days after. Please see our probiotic recommendations.

Therapeutic Recommendations: Nutrients

Medicinal Mushrooms- If you contemplate the subject of mushrooms at all, you probably consider them a tasty addition to your salad or casserole. However, the fact is that mushrooms have been used medicinally by the Chinese and Japanese for centuries. Most supply a wealth of protein, fiber, B vitamins, and vitamin C as well as calcium and assorted other minerals. Several species have exhibited phenomenal healing potential in the area of promoting immune function, reducing inflammation, combating allergies and supporting the body's detoxification mechanisms. Medicinal mushrooms assist in augmenting your immune system naturally giving added support during times of distress and adverse health.

Dosage: 2-4 capsules, 2-3 times per day

Recommendation: Mycophyto Ten Mushroom Formula

Essential Fatty Acids- Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs), specifically omega-6s and omega-3s, are crucial components to cell development and function but cannot be manufactured by the body—and are hence considered “essential.” Unfortunately, the typical American diet is rampant with unhealthy, refined omega-6 fatty acids, such as hydrogenated fats. Good omega-6 food supplies include fresh nuts, seeds and avocados. Essential omega-3s are in salmon, mackerel, and sardines. Plant sources of omega-3s include flax, hemp, and pine seeds, though these require undergoing conversion into EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) before the body can utilize them. You can secure EPA and DHA directly from a high-quality oil derived from fish living in clean waters, free of heavy metals, contaminants and flushed of nitrogen. This is a source of essential fatty acids needed for production of anti-inflammatory prostaglandins. Essential fatty acids can assist in alleviating asthma and allergy symptoms.

Dosage: (Udo's Oil) 2 tablespoons a day, preferably in the morning. Taking it in the evening might keep you awake. (Cod Liver Oil) 1 teaspoon daily with meals

Recommendation: Udo's Choice Oil Blend and Nordic Naturals Arctic Cod Liver Oil

Caution: Consult with your physician before using this product if you are pregnant, diabetic or allergic to iodine. Do not take this product if you are using blood thinners or anticipate surgery.

Probiotic- In order for the probiotic to work properly and do you the most good, it has to meet the following standards:

- It needs to contain specific and powerful strains, as not all strains generate results. The bacteria must be live and active at consumption to deliver the best results.
- It needs to deliver a minimum of 50 billion bacteria at consumption. The high number of bacteria is essential to have a positive

impact on the 2 pounds of bacteria present in the G.I. tract.

- Lastly, a carrier of enriched dairy ingredients is necessary to give the bacteria the energy they need to rapidly multiply in the body and to protect them through the stomach allowing them to reach the intestine.

Dosage: 1-2 teaspoons per day on an empty stomach

Recommendation: Bio-K Plus Probiotic

Magnesium- Studies show that high dietary intake of magnesium is associated with improvement in lung function, less wheezing, and fewer asthma attacks. This is a mineral that is made use of by every cell of the body and contributes in energy metabolism and protein synthesis. Your body cautiously protects blood magnesium levels, in part because no less than 350 enzymatic processes depend upon your magnesium level for activation.

The utilization of magnesium supplementation from 500-1000 milligrams daily is exceptionally helpful in many conditions such as bronchial asthma, as well as other respiratory ailments. In addition, stress plays a major role in allergic reactions. Magnesium plays a crucial role in dealing with all forms of stress, whether the stress is physical, emotional, or the end result injury. As magnesium quantities deteriorate, the incidence of allergies and asthma increases. In one study, at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, the researchers discovered that lab animals acutely deficient in magnesium possessed much higher blood levels of histamine, when exposed to matters that set off allergies in comparison to animals receiving sufficient magnesium.

Dosage: 500-1000 milligrams per day. It should be accompanied by 1000 milligrams of elemental calcium. Both calcium and magnesium supplements should not be taken at the same time as your essential fatty acids.

Recommendation: Life Extension Calcium Magnesium Powder

Quercetin- ** (Very important supplement for asthma)** Quercetin is a powerful immunostimulant and has an antihistaminic effect. It is a bioflavonoid belonging to the rutin family and is derived from plants and vegetables. Some of the richest sources are onions, apples, garlic, zucchini, buckwheat and blue-green algae. It is a very powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory. Quercetin helps reduce allergic reactions, asthma, and hay fever by preventing the release of histamine. By blocking the release of histamine rather than acting on histamine receptors on other cells, quercetin reduces allergic reactions more safely than many conventional drugs. Quercetin is also used to fight viruses such as herpes, respiratory infections, para-influenza type 3 and Epstein Barr.

Studies have also shown that it benefits the heart through strengthening capillaries, promoting circulation, and reducing cholesterol. Unfortunately Quercetin alone is not well absorbed. It is important to note that the other supplement that is required to aid in the absorption of quercetin for maximum benefit is Bromelain. Bromelain is a protein-digesting enzyme found in pineapples, and like Quercetin, has powerful anti-inflammatory abilities.

Dosage: 3,000 mg of Quercetin combined with a minimum of 450 mg and up to 1,500 mg of Bromelain/3 to 4 times a day. Once the symptoms are eliminated, a maintenance dose of 1,500 mg, 3 to 4 times a day is fine.

Recommendation: We have found two products that contain a dosage high enough to provide what you need. The first is Now Quercetin with Bromelain, and the other is Solgar Quercetin complex. Both of these products can be purchased at your local health food stores.

Vitamin C- Taken in high doses, vitamin C can reduce allergy symptoms by inhibiting the release of histamines in the body. Allergies to mold, dust, pollen, food and pollutants can be considerably reduced by taking vitamin C. It is a natural antihistamine that is capable of blocking the effect of inflammatory substances generated by some people to allergens such as pollen and pet dander. Allergies are frequently an underlying cause of sinusitis and may also activate the intensely itchy rashes associated with eczema. Various studies have revealed that vitamin C assists in preventing or improving asthmatic symptoms as well. Asthmatics are often deficient in vitamin C and other vitamins as well. In some cases, vitamin C has assisted in stopping exercise-induced asthma attacks when taken in adequate doses prior to a workout.

Individual tolerance for vitamin C is different. When your body reaches its tolerance level, you can be subjected to increased gas and possibly loose stools. This event is known as “bowel tolerance”.

Dosage: Mild allergy reactions require about 2,000-10,000 milligrams per day, taken in divided doses (the body excretes vitamin C within 4-6 hours).

Caution: If you consume aspirin and standard vitamin C (ascorbic acid) together in large doses, you may experience stomach irritation—possibly leading to ulcers. So, if you have to take aspirin regularly, please use an esterified form of vitamin C, and take it separately from the aspirin. Pregnant mothers are advised not to take more than 5,000 mg of vitamin C daily. A growing fetus may become dependent on this supplement and acquire scurvy when deprived of the accustomed megadoses after birth.

Recommendation: Any esterified vitamin C is our first suggestion as we feel that it is a remarkable form of C. It is created by having the vitamin C react with a necessary mineral, such as calcium, magnesium, potassium, sodium, or zinc. This produces a vitamin C that is non-acidic and includes metabolites identical to those produced by the body. Esterified vitamin C is absorbed into the bloodstream and tissue four times faster than standard forms of vitamin C because it moves into the blood cells more effectively and also remains in the body tissue longer. The concentration of vitamin C in white blood cells achieved by using esterified vitamin C are four times higher than those attained with standard vitamin C. Furthermore, and a very important fact; only one-third is lost during excretion in the urine.

Coenzyme Q10- Has the ability to counter histamine. In 2002, a Slovakian study that included 56 asthmatics found that they all had lower concentrations of CoQ10 than healthy volunteers. The authors of the study suggest that since the contribution of free oxygen radicals in the pathogenesis of bronchial asthma is generally accepted, and as CoQ10 acts to help prevent cellular damage from free radicals, the asthmatics could profit from supplementing CoQ10.

Dosage: 100-200 mg per day of the soft gels.

Recommendation: While most CoQ10 softgels will do the trick, Life Extension Foundation offers a Super Absorbable CoQ10 with D-Limonene. Just a warning though, that while it is the best, it has a price tag to match.

Vitamin B6- Asthma is common problem with children that is successfully treated with B6. Platon J. Collipp, M.D., chief of the Nassau County Medical Center's Department of Pediatrics, and his researchers, have discovered that B6 is both safe and valuable when it comes to alleviating asthma. Doctor Collipp and his research team discovered notable improvement in asthma sufferers who were treated with 50 milligrams of B6 daily for 3 months, followed by 100 milligrams of B6 daily for six months. As a matter of fact, children using 200 milligrams daily were eased of their wheezing, difficulty breathing, and tightness in their chest, more rapidly than those who used only 100 milligrams.

Dosage: 1 capsule daily with meals.

Caution: Some people have experienced temporary symptoms of peripheral neuropathy (tingling, numbness sensation, decreased sensation to touch or balance difficulties) while taking vitamin B6 in doses above 300 mg daily, particularly if the nutrient is taken without other B complex vitamins. This vitamin should not be used without co-ingestion of equivalent doses of other B-complex vitamins. Consult your doctor before taking this vitamin if you are taking levodopa (L-dopa).

Recommendation: Life Extension Vitamin B6 250mg

Therapeutic Recommendations: Herbal

Stinging Nettle-(*Urtica Dioica*) Four hundred years ago, the British herbalist Nicholas Culpeper claimed that nettle roots and leaves, used in juice or tea, were "safe and sure medicines to open the pipes and passages of the lungs." For many years, Australians have viewed nettle as a good treatment for asthma. They drink the juice of the roots and leaves mixed with honey or sugar, and they firmly believe that it relieves bronchial troubles. Americans, on the other hand, did not catch on until a little more than five years ago, when a scientific study was published showing that nettle is a potent antihistamine. Now nettle is increasingly recommended for hay fever and asthma.

Dosage: 300-500 mg three times per day with a meal. Special tip: When buying nettle supplements, make sure to differentiate nettle leaf from nettle root because they are used differently. Try to purchase either in a freeze-dried form or as an extract.

Recommendation: Gaia Herbs Concentrated Nettle Leaf Extract

Yamoa Powder- It is produced from the bark of a gum tree called *Funtumia elastica*. The bark is soaked in clean water, thoroughly dried, and turned into powder. Clinical trials are in the process; the first double-blind study using 78 participants was a resounding success, with 90 percent of the participants reporting that they were free from their long-term respiratory problems and with no adverse side effects. While Yamoa doesn't stop asthma symptoms immediately, most people experience an improvement in breathing and symptoms within seven to ten days, and most see definite improvement within 30 days. Yamoa powder has also helped with bronchitis and hay fever.

Dosage: The powder comes in a 30-gram container, and the best way to take it is to mix the 30-gram container with a one-pound jar of honey. Be sure and stir the mixture before each use. Take one teaspoon of the mixture in the morning with breakfast and a second teaspoon at dinnertime. (For children ages two through 12, use only one-half teaspoon/twice a day.)

Recommendation: You can order high quality Yamoa powder at www.yamoapowder.com

Schisandra Berry- (*Schisandra Chinensis*) is exceptional for asthma. Traditional Russian and Chinese medicines have long used schisandra for a wide variety of conditions, including coughs and other respiratory ailments, insomnia and kidney problems. Chinese medicine practitioners consider it specific for asthma. The seeds contain lignans, which are believed to be active constituents. Modern Chinese research suggests that these lignans stimulate the immune system, protect the liver, increase adaptation to stress, and may generate a mild sedative effect. Used largely for the lungs to initiate mucous discharges, this quality also marks schisandra for postnasal drip. It is especially effective for excess respiratory phlegm.

Dosage: Dried schisandra berries actually taste pretty good, so they can be taken as a tea. It is quite mild, so feel free to use as much as you wish. Schisandra is also very effective in liquid extract form.

Recommendation (bulk form): Mountain Rose Herbs bulk Schisandra

Recommendation (capsule form): Paradise Herbs Schisandra v-caps

Sinus Tea- For sinus congestion, you can try using a tea that is made up of:

- 1 teaspoon of yarrow flowers (*Achillea Millefolium*)
- 1 teaspoon of elder flowers (*Sambucus Nigra*)
- 1 tablespoon peppermint leaves (*Mentha Xpiperita*)
- 1 tablespoon elecampane root (*Inula Helenium*).

Place all the herbs in a covered container with 1 quart of boiling water. Steep for 20 minutes, strain and drink 1 cup three times daily. You can drink more if you are severely congested. In addition, it is very helpful to make use of a neti pot in conjunction with the tea.

Therapeutic Recommendations: Physical

Xlear- Xlear is a product made from xylitol, which is a safe, simple sugar present in fruits and vegetables, such as plums, corn and strawberries. Doctor Lon Jones, a researcher with Hale Center, Hi Plains Hospital, has developed a xylitol/saline spray called Xlear that helps the nose and immune system do what they naturally should do on their own. Certain harmful bacteria enter the body and attach themselves to membranes in the nose and throat. There they begin to culture and grow, causing infection and sickness. Xylitol is a natural enemy of bacteria. When the xylitol/saline solution is sprayed in the nose, it goes directly to the nasal passages and flushes out nasty germs such as *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*, and *Moraxella catarrhalis*—three bacteria that live only in the nose and are responsible for practically all upper-respiratory infections.

Dosage: For most allergies and mild asthma, the recommended dose is two sprays in each nostril three or four times a day. Tilt your head down and on the first spray aim the bottle toward the back of our head. Keep your head tilted down, and with the second spray, aim the bottle toward the top of your head. With severe asthma conditions, such as those that require a bronchodilator or Albuterol, follow the above procedure every one or two hours for the first three days, then cut back to two or three times a day. A very few people initially experience a slight burning or stinging sensation. This is to be expected if the nasal passages are raw, since the salt in the saline solution can burn slightly. This should subside as the tissue begins to heal. Those with long-standing asthma or allergy problems may experience a “cleansing episode.” After a few days to a week of using the spray, some individuals either cough up or excrete large amounts of mucus. From what the research states, this happens once, and the cleansing seems to accelerate the benefits of the Xlear.

Indications: Xlear can be used safely by pregnant women and children of all ages. Taking more than eight to ten grams of xylitol a day has produced stomachaches and diarrhea in some people. Keep in mind, however, that when you are using the spray, you absorb very small amounts of xylitol.

Recommendation: Xlear Nasal Spray

Neti Pot- How about a spring cleaning for your nose? Nasal rinsing or sinus irrigation is a simple, ancient technique. A warm saltwater rinse of the nasal passages takes a small sum of time and equates to big payoffs. A neti pot is just the ticket.

When you are exposed to irritants, such as allergens, pollution, debris, microbes and smoke, the mucus membranes of your sinuses enlarge, leading to a proliferation in mucus production; thicker, stickier mucus; clogged mucus flow; and a decline in nose hair function. Next comes congestion, infection and medication use.

Mucus that stagnates is a leading cause of sinus infections. A nasal rinse washes out built up mucus and waste before they can cause a problem. This simple use of a neti pot washes particles out, shrinks nasal membranes, augments the nose hair function, thins secretions and opens the tiny sinus openings. The salt diminishes swelling and the gentle blast of warm water works like a hose rinsing waste off a sidewalk.

So, what is the bottom line if you use a neti pot:

- Reduced allergy misery
- Decreased Congestion
- Healthier Sinuses
- Less Money Spent on Drugs!

Using a neti pot may not be the most glamorous thing to do, but it is safe, natural, and nasal rinsing often does what sinus surgery, antibiotics, decongestants and antihistamines don't. Go on, give it a try!

Air Cleaner- Most air purifiers can only filter down to 0.3 microns in size, but 90% of all particles in the air are smaller than 0.3 microns! We recommend the IQAir HealthPro Plus that has a patented HyperHEPA filtration filter that filters down to 0.003 microns with a guaranteed minimum efficiency of 99%. That means that HyperHEPA can remove up to 100 times more allergens than conventional air cleaners. It was also selected by the American Lung Association as their exclusive partner for indoor quality. In addition, it is the #1 air purifier used by hospitals worldwide. More importantly, IQAir is the only air cleaner clinically proven to be effective for allergies and asthma. It passed the most comprehensive double-blind, placebo controlled clinical trial. The HealthPro Plus filters:

- All types of airborne allergens
- All types of dust
- All types of soot (including diesel and candle soot)
- All types of bacteria
- All types of viruses
- All types of VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds)
- All types of odors (pet, cooking, tobacco, paint, ect)
- Most gaseous chemicals

Recommendation: IQ Air Health Pro Plus

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