

ALLERGIES



The warm weather does not only signal that summer is here, but that pollen is everywhere! Allergy sufferers worldwide understand this love-hate relationship with summer. Natural allergy relief was one thing that attracted me to the naturopathic profession, as I myself, found a vast improvement after changing my approach to allergies.

Before we get into what we can do about allergies, let's have a closer look at what is actually going on in the body. Pollen is recognized by your body as a foreign antigen, causing the immune system to recruit mast cells that gobble up the antigen and histamine. Histamine leads to even more blood flow attracted to that area where the pollen is (ex. nose, eyes, throat), leading to congestion, itchiness and an ongoing cycle. Antihistamines are targeted at preventing this cycle from getting out of control. Research shows that there are naturally-occurring plant compounds that have anti-histamine effects. I will get into more detail about these later in this article.

Naturopathic doctors like to first do no harm. This means to start with the basics such as: closing windows to avoid pollen buildup, using HEPA filters, washing linens frequently, a healthy diet and stress management. A diet high in antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables and lower in saturated fats and processed foods can help reduce inflammatory-related processes like allergies.

Below are some naturopathic dietary supports to reduce your allergy symptoms:

- **Quercetin** – This compound is a flavonoid that has been shown to have anti-allergy effects in studies. Foods that are high in quercetin are: capers, onions, and blue berries.
- **Vitamin C** – Ascorbic acid, the active constituent in vitamin C, was found to reduce histamine concentrations in the blood of patients with allergic diseases. Vitamin C is found in a plethora of foods like: bell peppers, dark leafy greens, broccoli, citrus fruits, just to name a few.



- **Nettle** – This plant called “stinging needle” due to its small spikes, has many uses, and has shown promise in allergy reduction. An in vitro study found that Nettle was an antagonist of Histamine receptors (basically inhibiting the receptor stimulation), and inhibited pro-inflammatory pathways. Nettle tea can be purchased at most grocery stores. Just don’t go and pick them out in the wild, because they will sting you – hence their name!
- These and other nutrients can be taken in supplement form for an added boost. Be sure to check with your ND before implementing them.

Do you suffer from allergies or know someone that does? I’d love to tell you more about how naturopathic medicine can help with allergy relief. Book an appointment with me!

Kaitlyn Zorn

Naturopathic Intern

References:

- <http://ezproxy.ccnm.edu:2077/pubmed/21625024>
- <http://www.livestrong.com/article/301326-foods-with-the-highest-content-of-querletin/>
- <http://ezproxy.ccnm.edu:2077/pubmed/23666445>
- <http://www.healthaliciousness.com/articles/vitamin-C.php>
- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19140159>

Healing Foundations Naturopathic Clinic

Phone: 519-821-1999

Email: clinic@healingfoundations.ca

Website: www.healingfoundations.ca

