

## Hay Fever Herbal Program

By Geoff D'Arcy, Lic. Ac., D.O.M.

**Believe it or not, hay fever is a modern disease.** It was virtually unknown before 1800 and has become common only during the last hundred years. The number of people affected by hay fever has continued to increase since 1900 and it has become prevalent in countries, such as Japan, where it was unknown 40 years ago.



Hay fever is the term used to describe allergy symptoms that occur when the body's immune system, designed to protect against invaders such as bacteria and viruses, becomes hyper-active and reacts against harmless pollen. Hay fever affects the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose and air passages with symptoms such as itchy and watery eyes, runny nose, sneezing, and irritability. Often hay fever is found in populations living along busy roads; thus it was thought that vehicle exhaust was involved. Research suggests that it makes the symptoms of hay fever worse, but many other aspects are involved including lifestyle and diet.

The "hay fever season" can be a different time of year for different people. In part, this is because trees, grasses, and weeds produce pollens during different seasons. For example, people in the eastern and midwestern United States who are sensitive to tree pollen may suffer in the early spring when trees such as elm, maple, birch and poplar are producing pollen. People who are sensitive to pollens produced by grasses may suffer in the late spring, and early summer, the time when most grasses are pollinating. About half of all hay fever sufferers are sensitive to grass pollens. So "hay fever" is not just in hay season. Mold and fungus spores, also airborne during the summer and fall months, cause reactions in many people. Frequently found around hay, straw, and dead leaves, their growth is encouraged by humid weather and by places with poor air circulation--damp basements for instance.

**What are pollen counts?** Basically, when the pollen count is high, those with allergies suffer more. Pollen counts are often given during weather reports and can be useful so we do not plan outdoor activities on days that are "high".

**Hay fever sufferers have an immune system which tags the harmless allergens as bad.** Consequently your body wants to rid itself of this alleged "bad" substance, so it floods the bloodstream with histamine, which is the chemical causing all the symptoms. There are many natural supplements that help to regulate immune function and therefore help the body combat histamines.

### SUPPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

1. [Allerg-Ease Formula](#): 2 capsules, 3 times daily.
2. [Quercetin / Bromelain Complex](#): 1 capsule, 3 times daily.
3. [Nettles](#): 1 capsule, 3 times daily.

Add [Dry-Ease Formula](#) for excessive phlegm, post nasal drip and runny nose.



## FORMULAS:

### Allerg-Ease Formula

Stimulant-free allergy support which calms the body's responses to allergens such as pollens, house dust mites, fungal spores, animal dander and cools the inflammatory responses in the nose, sinuses, throat and eyes. Relieves symptoms such as itchy, red, burning eyes, watery, runny or stuffed nose, sneezing, and frontal headache. This formula calms the body's responses to allergens such as pollens, house dust mites, fungal spores, and animal dander. It cools the inflammatory response in the nose, sinuses, throat, and eyes. It differs from our SINUS-EASE formula in that it contains herbs that reduce both the allergic response to allergens and the inflammatory consequence of this response.

This formula contains chrysanthemum, an herb that, along with forsythia, effectively clears heat and itching from the eyes. Astragalus and siler boost the immune system to defend against an allergen attack. Feverfew is an herb noted for its anti-inflammatory and anti-allergic effects. Feverfew inhibits the formation of two natural chemicals found in the body, prostaglandin and serotonin. Feverfew contains niacin and iron plus vitamin A and vitamin C. It helps to regulate normal body functions, working with the body's natural tendency to heal itself. It is also used to relieve severe headaches, migraines and reduce fevers by cooling the body. Licorice helps in building the body's resistance to allergens. Turmeric, long used in Ayurvedic and Chinese medicine, is an effective anti-inflammatory, potentiated by bromelain, an enzyme from pineapple.

### Quercetin/Bromelain Complex

Quercetin should be taken with vitamin C. Quercetin acts as a natural antihistamine. It is an antioxidant known as a bioflavonoid that functions as a natural antihistamine. It works by stabilizing mast cells—immune cells that release histamine and other inflammatory compounds involved in allergic reactions—when faced with intruders like pollen or mold spores. Quercetin, especially when combined with the absorption-enhancing enzyme, bromelain, can be very helpful. Quercetin is apparently able to block both the manufacture and release of histamine, reducing inflammation in the airways and lungs. Bromelain is a major anti-inflammatory agent often combined to potentiate with Quercetin.

### Nettles

An excellent source of the minerals iron, calcium, sodium, potassium, silica and of vitamins A, C, & D. Medicinally nettles are diuretic, astringent, tonic, and antispasmodic for the respiratory tissues. From a Traditional Chinese Medical viewpoint, the eyes are ruled by the Liver, and nettles help to nourish the 'Liver Yin' and thus calm the Liver's hyper reactivity. This in turn calms the allergic reactivity and flare-up.

### Dry-Ease Formula

This formula dissolves phlegm, mucus, and catarrh. It is used primarily for excessive phlegm. Eyebright and barberry bark are valuable astringents for mucus and have an effective anti-inflammatory action for the eyes. It effectively stops post-nasal drip.

## Diet

- Eat more fruits, vegetables, grains, acidophilus yogurt, raw nuts, seeds and plenty of fiber (unless you have allergies to any of these things.)



- Avoid cakes, chocolates, coffee, dairy products (except yogurt), soft drinks, sugar, tobacco, white flour products - basically any junk foods. These can impact negatively on you immune system and make allergies and general health and well being compromised.
- To reduce allergy symptoms, eat a moderately low-fat, high-complex-carbohydrate diet.
- Drink 1/2 of body weight in ounces of water daily (e.g., a 150 lb person should drink 75 oz of water per day.)
- Include a lot of the following foods in the diet: dark green, leafy vegetables, deep yellow and orange vegetables, bamboo shoots, cabbage, beet tops, beets, carrots, yams, onions, garlic, ginger, cayenne, and horseradish.
- Eliminate the following from the diet: alcohol, caffeine, and dairy products, bananas, chocolate, food colorings (tartrazine), peanuts, red meat, sugar, wheat.
- At best you can avoid any known allergens. This may mean reducing the time spent outside on certain days, and wearing sunglasses to minimize eye contact with pollens. Tight fitting sunglasses, washing/changing clothes after coming inside, especially on windy days, and washing hair, as pollen can stick to hair.

## Other Considerations

The traditional wisdom of Eastern medicine suggests that the Spring is the season of revitalization and birth, which the Chinese believe is governed by the Liver. Factors that influence the liver's energy making it less irritable and therefore less prone to hay fever include:

- **Emotionally:** Equanimity is the key to being in tune with Spring, since its governing organ (the liver) can be damaged by any excess of emotion leading to depression in the summer. Try meditation, gentle music or a spot of gardening.
- **Diet:** Spring is about rebuilding, so you need protein. But because the liver dominates - linked in Chinese theory with volatile emotions - you need sour foods to feed into the liver meridian and calm you. As a habit, use vinegar in dressings and eat lots of oranges, apples and grapefruits.
- **Exercise:** This is the time to step up the activity, particularly with stretching exercises. Tai Chi, Yoga and swimming are ideal.
- **Relaxation technique:** 20 minutes a day of relaxation helps to switch-off the fight or flight response, engages our parasympathetic nervous system, and replenishes our energy.
- **Time management:** Learn to manage your time more effectively. Learning to manage time more effectively helps us take control of one of the major stressors in life.
- **Physical Exercise:** 30 minutes, 5 times a week. Gentle consistent exercise, a little and often. Consult with your doctor for how much and how often. Consider Yoga, Tai Chi, or other gentle stretching with mild strengthening.

## References:

### Nettles

- Mittman P. *Planta Med* 1990 56(1): 44-7

### Bromelain Enzyme

- Baumuller, M. "Enzyme zur wiederherstellung nach sprunggelenkdorsionen." *Z. Allg. Med.*, 1992; 68: 61.



- Blonstein, J.L. "Oral enzyme tablets in the treatment of boxing injuries." *The Practitioner*, 1967; 198: 547.
- Boyne, P.S. & Medhurt, H. "Oral anti-inflammatory enzyme therapy in injuries in professional footballers." April 1967, 198: 543.
- Bucci, L.R. *Nutrition Applied to Injury Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine*, Boca Raton: CRC Press, 1995. p. 170.
- Hiss, W.F. "Enzyme in der sport- und unfallmedi-zin." *Continuing Education Seminars*, 1979.
- Muller-Hepburn, W. "Anwendung von enzymen in der sportmedizin." *Forum d. Prakt. Arztes*, 1970,18.
- Worschhauser, S. "Konservative therapie der sportverletzungen. Enzympräparate für therapie undprophylaxe." *Allgemeinmedizin*, 1990; 19: 173.
- Klein, G., et al. "Phlogenzym in der behand-lung der periarthropathia humerosacapularis tendopathica simplex." *Arzt + Praxis*, 1997; 781: 879-885.

## Turmeric

- Arora RB et al. Anti-inflammatory studies on *Curcuma longa*. *L Ind J Med Res*. 59: 1289. 1971.2.
- Ammon HPT et al. Mechanism of anti-inflammatory actions of curcumin and boswellic acids. *J Ethnopharmacology*. 38: 113. 1993

*\*The statements contained in this article have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease*

