

## HAY FEVER... WHAT IS IT?

Otherwise known as ALLERGIC RHINITIS, it is basically an over-reaction by your Immune system resulting in a symptomatic response to what is usually a 'harmless' allergen e.g., pollen (grass, trees and weeds), dust, molds, smoke, personal and home care product ingredients, animal dander, dust-mite faeces.

The immune system mistakes this 'harmless' allergen for an invader and it responds by telling cells to produce histamine which creates inflammation and a symptomatic response.



## COMMON SYMPTOMS ARE...

- Itchy eyes
- Puffy eyes
- Watery eyes
- Sensitivity to light
- Stuffy and Congested
- Runny nose
- Poor smell
- Poor sleep
- Mouth breathing
- Tired and Irritable
- Persistent cough
- Chronic cough
- Sinus pain
- Sinusitis
- Feeling pressure in the ears
- Ear infections
- Poor hearing
- Asthma
- Sneezing
- Runny nose
- Congested nose.
- Itchy nose
- Itchy throat
- Raspy and dry throat
- Itchy eyes
- Watery and/or puffy eyes

## WHAT CAUSES THIS OVER-REACTION?

Recent research suggests that Hay fever is directly linked to Dysbiosis – A microbial imbalance or impaired microbiota.

This can drive seasonal, or perennial allergies, as an imbalanced Gut Microbiome continually alters the immune system response.

With approximately 80% of the Immune system located in the Gastrointestinal tract and the Gut Microbiome being its teacher, poor gut health equals the Immune system being unmonitored.

## WHAT TO DO

Continue with the principles of the GRP to strengthen, rebalance and restore your Gut Microbiome, which in turn will strengthen your Immune system.

If you've had long standing hay fever it will take longer to reduce and eliminate symptoms, but you WILL see an improvement if you continue to feed your beneficial bacteria with the prebiotic and probiotic foods and implement your lifestyle strategies.

Avoid taking supplements or anti-inflammatories. While they may offer temporary relief, they are just act as Band-Aid, masking symptoms.

While I understand Hay fever is uncomfortable, the only way you'll know if it's getting better is by 'feeling it'.

## NATURAL TREATMENT OPTIONS

**Homeopathic remedies...** Hay Fever homeopathy pilules are an effective and natural treatment and provide relief of symptoms. You can purchase a 'combination' pilule or consult with a homeopath and determine the best 'simplex' remedy. Before consulting with a homeopath, ensure you pay attention to your particular local symptoms and write them down so your Homeopath can help you.

It is best to start the acute management of your allergies still several weeks before the onset of the 'season' for best results.

**Saltwater gargle...** can assist by moving allergens out. Add 1 tsp of ground pink Himalayan salt to 1 cup of hot water and stir well until salt dissolves. Let cool to room temperature and then gargle a few times, every hour or two, for approx. 30 seconds. NOTE: Never use 'Apple cider vinegar' as a gargle, as the acidity can inflame mucous membranes, damage teeth, and cause digestive issues.

**Saline Nasal Sprays...** may help to keep nasal hairs moist so that 'ALLERGENS' are moved along the hairs and down into the stomach where it is killed by gastric acids.

You can make your own saline spray by combining one cup (250ml, 8.45 fl.oz) of distilled water with 1 teaspoon of pink Himalayan salt (ground) in a saucepan. Boil for 10-mins with the lid on and then let set aside until room temperature. Use a neti-pot or straw to *gently* irrigate your nasal passages. Do NOT do if sinuses are inflamed!

Or you can buy sprays that are JUST Purified diluted seawater and sometimes with a combination of eucalyptus. Watch out for unneeded chemicals!!

### Hair brushing/Washing

Pollen, dust, dander etc (allergens) can get stuck in hair and then when sleeping at night get transferred to your pillow where you breathe it in. Brush hair well at night (outside) to remove any allergens.

**Essential oil, vapours...** help to ease clear sinuses and reduce inflammation. Add 10 drops of essential oils into a basin of hot water, put a towel over your head and breathe in the vapour for 5-10 minutes. Best essential oils are eucalyptus, tea tree, rosemary and peppermint. Do not use if sinuses are infected.

**Diffusers...** in the bedroom may help to ease congestion and improve sleep. A wonderful mix is 10 drops of Lavender with 3 drops each of Peppermint, Eucalyptus and Tea Tree oil. Tea Tree oil and Eucalyptus oil possess strong antiviral properties [6]

## PROTECTIVE MEASURES

**Reduce...** exposure to the allergen until your Immune system health improves.

**Wash...** your hands often with soap and water to remove contact with allergens that you can transfer to your eye, nose and mouth when touching.

**Face Masks...** Inhaled airborne allergens such as pollen, fungal spores, house-dust mites faeces, dust, animal dander etc. play a significant role in triggering typical allergic rhinitis symptoms. Face masks assist in reducing the burden of inspiratory particles, including common allergens.

**Close windows...** at home (and work if you can). To avoid allergen.

**Humidifiers...** may be really helpful when sleeping at night as they add moisture to the air. Dry air may irritate the airways and result in wheezing, coughing and a sore throat. Cool-mist humidifiers are safe to use and may help ease coughing and congestion.

**Nuke your bedding...** by stripping your body of sheets and pillow slips and washing at high temperatures. Add in some water-soluble lavender or eucalyptus oil. Let dry naturally in the sun.

**Beat your Quilt...** What?? Yes, beat it like there is no tomorrow 😊 It's very therapeutic! It's tradition in Japan for people to hang their quilt (and futon mattress) in the sun and beat with a special bamboo stick called a 'tataki' to shake the dust off and remove dust mites. And while you're at it... beat your pillows too!!

**Nuke your towels...** and wash at high temperatures. Replace your handtowel daily so as not to re-infect yourself with allergens that land on the towel. Or consider using paper-towels after visits to the bathroom.

**And finally, be PATIENT...** don't try to get rid of Hay fever. It is telling you something about your health!

Research is conclusive... a healthy and diverse Gut Microbiome is associated with fewer allergic symptoms. It is well established that the microbiome can modulate the immune response, from cellular development to organ and tissue formation exerting its effects through multiple interactions with both the innate and acquired branches of the immune system.

### REFERENCES

Pascal, M. Perez-Gordo, M., Caballero, T, et.al. (2018). Microbiome and Allergic Diseases

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