

Spring has finally arrived! For those of us in Minnesota, this is a time of much rejoicing as the weather gets warmer, birds start chirping, and flowers start blooming.

And with flowers blooming, that means pollen starts spreading. Yes, that's right. With all the wonders spring brings, it also signifies that allergy season is n upon us. Pollen allergies are generally mild enough (sneezy, coughing, and watery eyes), but are there any natural ways to deal with these allergies? Is there any natural relief from this seasonal pest? Keep reading and find out.

What is pollen?

First, what is pollen?

ScienceDirect defines pollen as “a very fine powdery substance that’s usually yellow in color. It’s generated in a structure on the end of the stamen (the male reproductive part of the flower) known as the anther and its purpose is to fertilize other plants in the same species. In order for pollination to occur, pollen grains must be transferred from the anther to the female stigma of another plant. This process creates seeds with genetic information for new vegetation.”

In other words, flowers create pollen as part of their reproductive system to create new flowers. During the time of spring when flowers bloom and blossom, pollen is also in abundance.

Why do we get an allergic reaction to pollen?

Allergic reactions are your body’s signal that something harmful or dangerous is entering into your system. In some severe cases this is a helpful reaction to genuinely harmful production. But in the case of this benign powder, your immune system falsely believes pollen is dangerous. In an attempt to fight against it, your immune system releases antibodies to attack the pollen particles. This produces a chemical known as histamine. When histamines release from cells in your body, it boosts the blood flow in the area of your body that the allergen affected, such as your nose. This causes inflammation, which lets other chemicals from your immune system step in to do repair work. Histamines then attach to the cells in your nose and cause it to become stuffy or runny or the eyes around your eyes to become puffy and itch.

What can you do?

While a pollen allergy is relatively benign in most cases, its symptoms are still annoying to deal with year after year.

That’s why in my research on this topic, I went to Dr. Berg’s YouTube channel to see what would be some natural ways to boost your immune system and treat a pollen allergy. Dr. Berg’s overall advice was to boost your immune system. This can be through supplements and/or some natural practices and habits that you can weave into your everyday life.

How do you boost your immune system?

Below are some recommendations and suggestions to help you boost your immune system and fight off pollen allergies. I've also included video links below for further information if you would like to know more.

- **Habits Practices**

- Intermittent Fasting - Intermittent fasting is a great way to keep your body running on the nutrients it needs without wasting energy on added food or other consumption. Intermittent fasting is simply the practice of eating within a smaller window of time everyday. You can practice fasting for 18 hours and eating in a 6 hour window, fasting for 16 hours and eating in an 8 window, or split it evenly between fasting for 12 hours and eating during the other 12 hours. This boosts your immune system and helps your body develop the strength to fight off allergies. Watch video 1 if you're interested in more details.

- **Nutrition and supplements:**

- Increase Probiotics - Supplements or fermented veggies (Video 1)
- Increase Vitamin D3 - Supplement or more sun (Video 1)
- Increase Folic Acid - Supplement or green leafy veggies (Video 2)
- Increase Vitamins B6 and B12 - Supplements (Video 2)

- **Alternative Allergy Relief**

- Low Dose Allergen Immunotherapy - This is a treatment to help heal allergies by introducing low doses of the allergen to your body to help build up immunity and resistance to it. Check out video three below for more information.

- **Natural Remedies for symptom relief:**

- Stinging Nettle Root – Make a tea (Video 4)
- Betaine Hydrochloride – Supplement (Video 4)
- Spanish Black Radish – Supplement (Video 4)
- Vitamin C - Supplement (Video 4)
- Quercetin – A very good antihistamine (Video 5)

Are there any additional causes to a low immune system?

Some research is showing that low stomach acid can cause the immune system to become hyper due to food not being digested properly. I recently had a patient whose stomach's acid reflux had been worse the last two weeks due to his pollen allergy. There might be a connection here that's worth exploring if this is something you've noticed in your own body. Watch video six if you're interested.

As spring continues on, I hope this information gives you some hope that you don't have to suffer with these seasonal allergies anymore and some ideas for natural remedies.

Welcome back to health!

Resources:

- ScienceDirect:
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/agricultural-and-biological-sciences/pollination>
- Video 1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoStyi1J4wE>
- Video 2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zsq__sae5Yc
- Video 3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QcHv-0vpGz8>
- Video 4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6b436sk5nIQ>
- Video 5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5oZtFGUr1c>
- Video 6. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBttSj0kLqw>