

# The misery of Spring Allergies



## Nothing to sneeze at!

More than one in six Canadians suffer from hay fever, or seasonal allergic rhinitis. One nation-wide survey suggests as many as 10 million Canadians may suffer allergy symptoms, and that more women than men admit to symptoms. The survey also found that 55 percent of Canadians claim their allergies cut into their productivity and more than a quarter say they'll limit their outdoor activities to prevent the onset of symptoms. And that's nothing to sneeze at!

## Is your misery a cold or is it Spring Allergies? What your symptoms say . . .



You can be pretty sure your itchy eyes and sneezing are the result of an allergy if (one or more symptoms may occur simultaneously):

- There is no fever and no muscle ache.
- Mucous secretions are clear and runny.
- Sneezes occur in multiple, rapid sequences.
- Your nose, ears and throat itch (especially the roof of the mouth).
- Eyes are red, irritated and weepy.
- Sinus congestion and pressure.
- Slight wheezing or asthma.
- Tiredness.
- Symptoms last longer than seven to 10 days.

## Who Are The Big Spring Allergy Offenders?



### April/May

Trees are the main culprits in early spring. Trees produce great quantities of pollen because they have to rely on the wind to get it to the intended target for pollination to occur.

Among the worst offenders are ash, alder, birch, box-elder, cedar, elm, maple, mulberry, oak and walnut. "The oaks shed copious amounts of pollen, more than all other plants," according to Aerobiology Research Laboratories in Nepean, ON



### June/July

In late spring to early summer, pollen from grasses take over from trees. The grasses that most often cause allergic reactions include Bermuda, Johnson, Kentucky bluegrass, timothy, fescue, orchard and sweet vernal.

Lower pollen counts for grasses usually mean the symptoms are not as severe as with spring trees. However, pollination generally lasts longer with grasses, so the symptoms may be present for a longer period.



# Natural alternatives for your hay fever symptoms

Over the counter (OTC) Canadian market for cough, cold and allergy (hay fever) remedies was \$748 million in 2012. That's a lot of people trying to find relief. Natural products have been used traditionally to also provide effective relief too, but without many of the side effects often associated with some OTC medicines. Below are a few popular natural solutions to help you find relief of your seasonal allergy symptoms.

**Bitter Orange:** Bitter orange contains compounds called synephrine, which are similar in action to ephedrine yet milder. Ephedrine is similar in molecular structure to pseudoephedrine used in OTC decongestant medicines. Bitter orange is commonly used in traditional Chinese medicine as an expectorant for eliminating phlegm and relieving congestion. It increases circulation to the head, shrinks swollen tissues, and dilates respiratory passages for normal breathing.

**Fenugreek:** Traditionally used in Herbal Medicine as an expectorant and astringent to help relieve excess mucous in the upper respiratory passages (anti-catarrhal).

**Goldenseal:** The root contains certain alkaloids, namely berberine and hydrastine which have a strong affinity to the mucous membranes of the respiratory tract. Traditionally used in Herbal Medicine to help relieve the symptoms of upper respiratory tract infections.

**Horseradish:** The well-known herb and food condiment, horseradish, is notorious for dilating and clearing the sinus and respiratory tract—as anyone who has eaten a forkful can attest. The nasal and bronchial dilating properties of horseradish are can be attributed to the herb's volatile oils.

**Marshmallow:** Traditionally used in Herbal Medicine for its mucilaginous properties which are known to soothe irritated mucous membranes. As an expectorant marshmallow aids the body in expelling excess mucous.

**Mullein:** Originally native to Europe and Asia, mullein has spread throughout North America. The herb is prized in traditional herbal medicine for coughs and congestion

and to expel mucous. It contains soothing mucilage, flavonoids, and saponins, which protect and soothe irritated mucous membranes and help expel mucous from the respiratory tract. Some Native American tribes would even smoke dried mullein leaves to relieve wheezing.

**Quercetin:** Found in most fruits and vegetables, quercetin is an antioxidant-bioflavonoid that is included in many natural hay fever formulas. It has been clinically shown to inhibit inflammation and has antihistamine properties. This may account for its reported popularity in helping relieve allergy symptoms, since the release of histamine due to hay fever causes inflammation of the mucous membranes and mucous secretions.

**Stinging Nettle:** Commonly used to relieve allergy symptoms, nettle relieves inflammation of the mucous membrane due to seasonal allergic rhinitis. Interestingly, the minute hairs covering the stocks of the nettle plant cause an irritating allergic rash when they come in contact with the skin, of which nettle leaves are an antidote.

**Vitamin C:** This well-known antioxidant has been found to possess antihistamine effects and may inhibit the amount of histamine released due to allergen exposure.



# Spring Allergies Survival Guide



## HistaBlock

**USE** — Taken daily to provide systematic relief of hay fever. The formula combines traditional herbs with bio-flavonoids to act as a natural decongestant, open up the airways, reduce runny nose and watery eyes and control irritation, itching and inflammation.

### BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Used in Herbal Medicine to help relieve seasonal allergy symptoms.
- Supports the body's efforts to control inflammation and swelling of mucous membranes.
- Formula includes stinging nettle, bitter orange and quercetin.



## AL-J (Capsules and Liquid)

**USE** — Taken daily during times of seasonal respiratory irritation. AL-J is an expectorant formula containing mucilaginous herbs to soothe inflamed and irritated mucous membrane. In traditional herbal medicine, expectorants help the body to remove excess mucus from the respiratory tract.

### BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Helps relieve congestion of the respiratory tract.
- Helps relieve symptoms of congestion of the respiratory tract, bronchitis and nasal/throat catarrh.
- Contains horse radish, fenugreek and mullein herbs.



## SN-X

**USE** — An all-herbal medicinal formula based on the the work and research of the renowned American master herbalist and healer Dr. John Raymond Christopher, M.H., N.D.

### BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Contains bitter orange, marshmallow and goldenseal.
- Bitter orange is commonly used in traditional Chinese medicine as an expectorant for eliminating phlegm and relieving congestion.