



Back Column

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Some natural ways to help with Allergy season

While many of us who have been facing the dark and cold days of winter are looking forward to the spring thaw, for allergy sufferers the change in season comes with a thorny side. About 25 percent of the population suffers from allergies, especially during the spring and fall when tree, grass and flower pollens, mold and other particles are all carried in the air. It's important to note that all allergies, whether they occur only in the spring or year-round, are a reflection of an impaired immune system. While an immune reaction to a foreign invader, such as a fever to kill a virus, is a sign of a healthy immune system, when you have a strong reaction to a whiff of grass or flower pollen your immune system is overreacting. Symptoms range from itchy eyes and throat, sneezing, runny nose, sinus congestion, asthma, post-nasal drip, headaches, foggy thinking, fatigue and even diarrhea. Many of these symptoms make up what is known as allergic rhinitis, or hay fever. You may be tempted to take an over-the-counter antihistamine, decongestant or other drug to get rid of allergy symptoms, but there are other more healthy options that will address not only the symptoms but also the underlying cause.

Strengthen the Immune System

Strengthening the immune system is an important step. Ideally, you should work on having a healthy immune system well before spring comes around so you'll be ready for allergy season. So how do you build up your immune system? Eliminating sugars and some grains from your diet are two important physical principles to strengthen your immune system.

Additionally, obtaining enough sleep and exercise and having an important tool to address the emotional traumas in your life will

be particularly helpful.

Omega-3 Essential Fatty Acids

The essential fatty acids found in fish oil and cod liver oil can reduce both allergic and inflammatory response. Cod liver oil may be particularly beneficial because it also contains vitamin A, which enhances the immune system and soothes irritated mucous membranes. Cod liver oil also contains vitamin D, however, so if you do choose to take cod liver oil during the spring, I highly recommend that you get your vitamin D levels tested. Although most Americans' vitamin D levels are far less than optimal, it is possible to overdose on vitamin D, especially during the spring and summer when you'll likely be getting vitamin D from the sun. Again, cod liver oil can be very beneficial, but if you take it in the spring or summer I strongly advise you to have your vitamin D levels tested. The quality of the fish oil and cod liver oil is also extremely important. In my research--and in my clinical experience with my patients--I have found that:

The liquid form is superior to capsules. Certain brands definitely seem inferior to others so check your local health food store to see what they carry and research the quality of that brand.

Consider Food and Chemical Sensitivities

If you tend to have allergies year-round with increased symptoms around springtime you may be suffering from a food or chemical sensitivity. If you think a food allergy may be partly to blame, avoiding sugar, fruit juices, most grains and pasteurized dairy products is nearly always helpful.

Replacing commercial milk with raw milk from grass-fed cows is also usually well tolerated and highly health. Chemical sensitivities can result if your body is sensitive to any number of toxins such as pesticides, synthetic paint or building materials, cosmetics, plastics and many more. Interestingly, while the chemicals are most obviously responsible for the physical reactions, the chemicals alone are usually not the primary cause. Instead, the primary cause of chemical sensitivity is often emotional trauma.

Air Purifiers

A simple option to reduce your exposure to potential allergens is to purchase an air purifier for your home or work environment. There are many different types of air filters on the market, so you will want to choose one that is suitable to your needs (think about the type of allergens you want to remove, as well as the amount of space you need to clean).

Vitamin E May Lower Risk of Asthma and Allergies

People who eat foods rich in vitamin E may be protected from certain allergies, new findings suggest. Researchers looked at data from more than 2,600 adults aged 18 to 70 years. The subjects answered questions about their diet and their symptoms of asthma and hay fever and were also tested using IgE skin tests for allergies to grass pollen, cat fur and dust mites. Researchers found that every additional milligram (mg) of vitamin E consumed in the diet lowered antibody levels by more than 5%, with the beneficial effect leveling off at 7 mg of vitamin E per day. According to the researchers "Higher concentrations

of vitamin E intake were associated with lower serum IgE concentrations and a lower frequency of allergen sensitization." Since asthma involves increased levels of free radicals (oxidants), antioxidants such as vitamin E may reduce the likelihood of asthma by reducing levels of these compounds, lead researcher Dr. Andrew Fogarty from the University of Nottingham in the UK told Reuters Health.

Vitamin E is found in:

- vegetable oils
- wheat germ
- cereal grains
- fruits
- green vegetables
- meat
- eggs
- fish

Dr. Fogarty and his colleagues conclude that "These findings may explain the beneficial effect of dietary vitamin E on the incidence of asthma."

Dr. Showalter's comments:

We can also test using blood analysis how your immune system is functioning. Then we can give you good advice on how to get your immune system functioning at it's optimum. I have used the fish oil capsules this year for my allergies and they have improved quiet dramatically. Both these articles offer some helpful guidance for natural alternatives for allergies. For further guidance call our office for appointment.

Sources:

The Lancet November 4, 2000; 356: 1573-1574

www.Mercola.com

May is National Arthritis Month

During National Arthritis Month, the Arthritis Foundation is encouraging people to “Make This The Year You Get Active” by emphasizing the importance of exercise. They suggest the following:

- Try to move your joints gently through their full range of motion every day.
- Gradually build up endurance exercises to 20 to 30 minutes per day, at least three times a week.
- After exercising, cool down for 5 to 10 minutes to help you cool off and let your heart slow down and help your muscles relax.
- If you are having a flare, do not skip exercises completely. To do nothing leads to stiff and weak muscles. A balance between rest and activity is necessary, even during a flare.

Source: www.arthritis.about.com

If you or someone you know is having problems with stiffness from Arthritis, we can help with our Science Based Nutrition and Chiropractic. Call today for an appointment 423-855-5053

Healthy Snacking Made Simple

Regardless of particular cravings, Americans have one thing in common—we love to snack. And these days we snack more than ever. But snacking doesn't have to be a guilty pleasure or destructive habit. Nutrition experts at the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) believe that healthy snacking can be an essential part of a nutritious diet.

Health benefits of snacking: Don't think of “snacking” as a bad word. Snacking sensibly comes with many benefits. According to AICR, healthy snacking can help you meet your daily nutrient needs, allow you to get nutrition and energy whenever you need a boost, and help prevent you from overeating during your regular meals.

Perhaps the most important job of healthy snacking is the role it has in helping prevent serious illnesses—from cancer to heart disease to diabetes. “When we talk about healthy snacks, it's not a question of just picking out what disease you want to be protected from,” says Melanie Polk, MMSc, RD, FADA, registered dietitian and director of nutrition education at AICR. “Plant-based foods are protective against a variety of diseases and promote good health. So vegetables, fruits, whole grains—these are foods that can help us reduce our risk for many diseases.”

Avoid snacking pitfalls: Although smart snacking can be beneficial to your health, over-snacking or snacking on foods with low nutritive value can be unhealthy. Traditionally, a snack has been defined as a small, light meal that can be eaten between regular meals. Somewhere along the line, though, the snack evolved—and not necessarily for the better.

Over the past couple of decades, American life has become increasingly fast-paced. As a result, many busy people rely on portable snacks as meal replacements. Substituting nutritionally incomplete snacks for regular meals is a potential problem associated with snacking, according to AICR. To be a truly beneficial part of your diet, a snack should be used as a supplement, not a substitute.

Some snacks, such as trail mix or dried fruit are a little higher in calories but are still nutritious. For these foods, Polk recommends portion control. Habitual snacking can also be a problem among snack lovers. “You have to think to yourself, ‘Am I really hungry?’” says Polk. “It's possible that you may not be truly hungry. In that case, find an alternative activity, such as taking a walk around the block, responding to e-mail or returning a phone call. You've got to put snacking in perspective. How many calories you can afford should be your guide in order to prevent weight gain.”

Source: *Family Circle* Feb 17, 2004

With our Science Based Nutrition program, we usually recommend if someone has high or low sugar to eat a couple of handfuls of almonds, pumpkin seeds, a piece of chicken or carrots. These nuts should be raw & unsalted, the chicken baked or grilled. I don't usually recommend snacking for everyone.

Lauren's Recipe Corner

Exotic Salad

- 1 (6oz) can sliced mushrooms, drained
- 1 (6oz) can sliced black olives, drained
- 1 (6oz) can artichoke hearts, drained
- 1 (14.25 oz) can hearts of palm, drained and sliced
- 1 (15oz.) can baby corn, drained

In a large bowl combine mushrooms, olives, artichoke hearts, hearts of palm and baby corn.

In a small bowl, combine olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt, pepper, parsley and basil. Pour over vegetables.

Source: allrecipes.com

Dressing:

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 sprigs fresh parsley, chopped
- 4 leaves fresh basil, chopped



100 Years Ago:

The average life expectancy in the U.S. was 47 years.

Only 14% of the homes in the U.S. had a bathtub.

Sugar cost 4 cents a pound. Eggs were 14 cents a dozen.

The average wage in the U.S. was 22 cents an hour.

Question of the Month:

Q. What is in cod liver oil?

- A. Omega-3, Vit. D & Vit. A
- B. Omega-15, Vit. K & Vit. C
- C. Omega-6, Vit. A & Vit. E
- D. Omega-9, Vit. B12 & Vit. B6

The first patient to call with the correct answer will win a FREE massage and T-shirt. (once per patient, please). The answer to last month's question was: B. Cortisol **Sue Woolery** answered the question right Good job! Our **Patient of the Month** for April is **Joe Underwood**. Congratulations! **Joe** will receive a \$40 gift certificate to the Hamilton Place Mall area.

A random number is picked each month so everyone has a chance to win!!

Be sure and tune in to 102.3 FM every Wednesday night from 7-8 PM for Optimum Health Hour. Dr. Showalter will be discussing health and chiropractic topics. Call in your questions at 267-1023.

B vitamins: All you need to know

Vitamin B9– Folic Acid

Vitamin B9, also called folic acid or folate, is one of eight water-soluble B vitamins. All B vitamins help the body to convert carbohydrates into glucose (sugar), which is "burned" to produce energy. Folic acid is crucial for proper brain function and plays an important role in mental and emotional health. It aids in the production of DNA and RNA, the body's genetic material, and is especially important during periods of high growth, such as infancy, adolescence and pregnancy. Folic acid also works closely together with vitamin B12 to regulate the formation of red blood cells and to help iron function properly in the body.

Folic acid deficiency is the most common B vitamin deficiency. Animal foods, with the exception of liver, are poor sources of folic acid. Plant sources rich in folic acid are frequently not obtained in adequate amounts in the diet. Alcoholism, irritable bowel syndrome, and celiac disease contribute to deficiency of this important nutrient. Folic acid deficiency can cause poor growth, tongue inflammation, gingivitis, loss of appetite, shortness of breath, diarrhea, irritability, forgetfulness, and mental sluggishness.

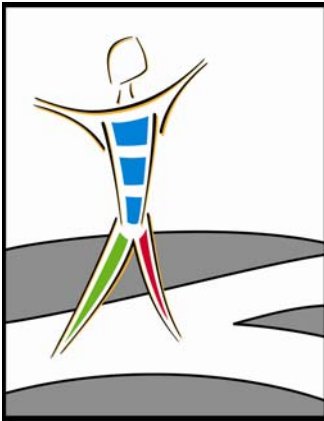
Pregnancy can put a woman at risk for folic acid deficiency as the fetus easily depletes a mother's nutrient reserves.

Folic acid deficiency during pregnancy increases the risk for neural tube defects including cleft palate, spina bifida, and brain damage. Neural tube defects are birth defects caused by abnormal development of the neural tube, a structure that eventually gives rise to the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord). In 1996, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized the addition of folic acid to many grain foods (such as bread and cereal). Since this time, the prevalence of neural tube defects in the United States has decreased.

Rich sources of folic acid include spinach, dark leafy greens, asparagus, turnip, beet and mustard greens, Brussels sprouts, lima beans, soybeans, beef liver, brewer's yeast, root vegetables, whole grains, wheat germ, bulgur wheat, kidney beans, white beans, lima beans, mung beans oysters, salmon, orange juice, avocado, and milk.

Source: www.parentsplace.com

Next Month...B12



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We're on the web!

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**Contact us today to subscribe to our free monthly
newsletter! Listen every Wednesday 7-8pm on
talk radio 102.3FM for Optimum Health Hour**

Just a reminder....

Patient Appreciation Day is May 12th

On Wednesday, May 12th, all of our existing patients will receive a **FREE** adjustment in honor of our 4th year anniversary.

If you know a family member, friend or co-worker who would like to try chiropractic care, new patients will be seen on Thursday May 13th or Friday May 14th for **FREE**.*

Call for your appointment now!!!

*Consultation with Dr. Showalter, exam and x-rays, if needed

(Worker's comp and P.I. cases excluded)

