

## It's Allergy Season!

Windy season is here along with all the pollens that come with it. Here are some tips for allergy season.

Symptoms of allergies are a scratchy throat, sneezing, runny nose, congestion, itchy eyes, skin redness and sensitivity. Often we will think we are coming down with a cold. Allergy symptoms last longer and don't progress the way a cold does. Even if you are not sure which it is, come in to the acupuncture clinic to be treated. We can usually tell by your pulses if it is allergies or a cold. Either way we can treat both.

### Prevention

The best treatment is prevention. Four to six weeks before the season starts, come in for some acupuncture treatments, for many people 4-6 will do it, or start taking supplements. Keep your house pollen free. Do a nasal wash (see below).

### Supplements

Some people have found that these supplements are helpful, you will have to experiment to see what works for you. Start taking them 4 weeks before the season starts. Double the dose for two weeks if you are already getting symptoms.

- Evening Primrose Oil 500mg a day
- Borage Oil 50 mg a day
- Vitamin C 1000+ mg a day
- Quercetin - a form of Vitamin C
- Nettle extract\* - as directed on the bottle
- Local extracts of pollens\* - as directed

\*available from Herbs. Etc in Santa Fe or The Herb Store on Carlisle in Nob Hill

### Acupuncture

Six basic treatments (or sometimes less) are usually enough to get your symptoms under control. At the same time we balance your constitution so that you are less likely to be affected each year.

### Nasal Wash

Washing out your nose with 1/2 cup of lukewarm water with a pinch of non-iodized salt (so that it tastes like seawater) is helpful to remove the pollens and to sooth your inflamed membranes. It helps to calm down your immune response.

- You can use a Neti pot to pour the mixture into one nostril with your head held sideways so the water comes out the other nostril
- You can use a bulb syringe or squeeze bottle. Be very careful to do this gently and don't force it.

It is important to get your nasal symptoms under control because the immune cells in your membranes (called Mast cells), that respond to the pollens as a threat, release chemicals that cause inflammation. If the symptoms are not controlled, your membranes make more Mast cells and the allergies can get worse each year. If necessary, use over-the-counter or medicine from your MD.

### At Home

- Keep windows closed and use air conditioning if you're allergic to pollen.
- Take off outdoor shoes and clothes, keep pets clean or wash them off
- Filter the air. Use high efficiency particulate air filters. Clean air filters frequently.
- Windy days are worse. Do errands early or late in the day as pollen counts are highest between 10am-4pm.

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