



Spring is Here! But if you can't breathe, what's the fun in that?



As nature awakes each spring and plants begin to bud and bloom, flowers release their pollen and millions of Americans are suddenly miserable. If you're one of those people who suffers from hay fever, then this newsletter is for you.

Technically, it's not hay fever, it's rhinitis, and pollen isn't the only thing that causes it. Rhinitis is an inflammatory condition that affects the sensitive membranes of the nasal and sinus passages, the eyes and the throat. We'll be talking primarily about allergic rhinitis, where the inflammation is caused by allergic reactions. However, rhinitis can have other causes besides allergies. But, whatever the cause, having congested nasal passages, a runny nose, itchy, watery eyes and an irritated throat isn't very fun.

Before we talk about how to deal with rhinitis, let's understand a little more about what is happening. Anytime the sensitive membranes in your upper respiratory tract are exposed to irritants, inflammation can occur. Tissues swell and mucus is secreted to try to flush the irritation away.

In allergic rhinitis, the body's immune system over-responds to specific non-infectious particles (such as pollen, dust or mold) which are generally harmless and don't trigger an immune response in most people. In the case of an allergic reaction, the immune system overproduces immunoglobulin E (IgE) antibodies. When antibodies attach to an allergen, it causes your body to release histamine and other biochemicals into your bloodstream. This causes inflammation and the symptoms associated with rhinitis.

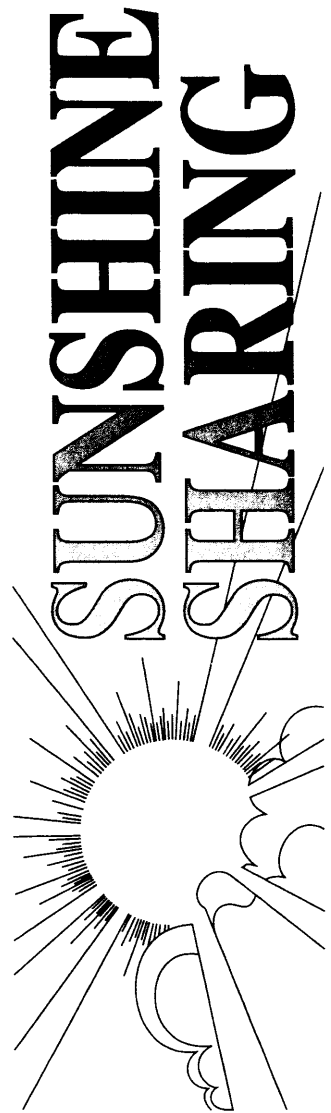
In most people, these symptoms include sneezing; wheezing; stuffiness; itchy, runny nose and throat; post-nasal drip; itchy, watery eyes; conjunctivitis; earaches and insomnia. Many feel a reduced sense of taste or smell and even difficulty hearing. Others suffer from a nasal voice, breathe noisily or snore and others complain of frequent headaches and feeling chronically tired. Some people are more sensitive and will experience nasal and respiratory congestion, pain and pressure in the face. In more severe cases, rhinitis can produce yellow or greenish discharge from the nose, a chronic cough that produces mucus, poor appetite, nausea and sometimes a fever. For some, these allergic reactions can even trigger asthma and/or migraines.

Seasonal allergic rhinitis, which occurs during specific seasons of the year, is always caused by pollen. Tree and grass pollens, as well as pollen from flowers like ragweed, plantain and dandelion, are common culprits. However, when the rhinitis symptoms occur year-round, the allergic reactions are usually caused by indoor irritants such as dust, dust mites, pet dander, feathers and mold. The non-allergic rhinitis can be caused by household cleaning agents, cosmetics, perfumes and other chemicals.

Food allergies and respiratory allergies are often linked. So, if one experiences rhinitis, it is also possible that one has food allergies as well.

Most of the medical treatments available for these conditions only treat the symptoms, but never actually cure the underlying problem. Fortunately, there are natural ways to relieve both allergic and non-allergic rhinitis and create some more permanent relief.

Learn about these natural remedies for rhinitis inside...



Your guide to better health the natural way.

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