

## **Natural treatments for hayfever**

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During spring and early summer, many people experience sneezing, a runny or stuffy nose and streaming or itching eyes, as the level of pollens in the air increase.

For some, hayfever is merely an inconvenience, but for severe sufferers the symptoms can be quite debilitating.

Conventional treatment is usually the use of anti-histamines, which are commonly available over the counter from pharmacies. The main drawback with many anti-histamines is that they can make you drowsy – not much good if you are trying to work or are sitting exams.

### **Who suffers from hayfever?**

Hayfever can affect anyone, of any age. Some people develop it as adults, and some children seem to grow out of it – every case is different. It is quite usual for hayfever to affect several members of a family, indicating that there may be an inherited sensitivity to pollen. It can also be more prevalent among those with a family history of asthma and other respiratory infections.

### **How can natural remedies help?**

Herbs, supplements and homeopathic remedies can greatly relieve the symptoms without the side-effects of drowsiness. The box below summarises some of the treatments that may help with your symptoms.

Common hayfever symptoms may be similar to the effects you suffer when slicing an onion – runny nose and watering eyes. If your hayfever symptoms are similar to this, you may benefit from the remedy *allium cepa* which is made from onion. (This is the principle on which homeopathy is based – like cures like).

Those with allergies may also benefit from an immune boost, so herbs and supplements to boost immunity are useful (see box).

### **Can natural therapies cure hayfever?**

There are many examples where treatment with a qualified herbalist or homeopath has resulted in a diminished tendency towards hayfever.

Homeopaths often use a two-pronged approach; firstly they may prescribe remedies specific for the individual hayfever symptoms such as those shown in the box. Secondly they will treat 'constitutionally' with the aim of strengthening the immune system and reducing the tendency to a pollen allergy. Because the hayfever season can be quite

short, treatment may be over 2 or 3 years, although appointments are generally several weeks or months apart. Treatment can be started at any time of year, but practitioners often prefer to begin in early spring before the symptoms are at their worst.

### Is there anything else I can do?

Eliminating or reducing the amount of wheat and dairy in your diet may help – many people with allergies are also intolerant to these commonly consumed foods, and reducing their consumption will boost your body's immunity.

Eating a diet high in fruit and vegetables as well as munching on plenty of seeds will help to boost immunity as well.

Here are some natural remedies that you can use to help you achieve a sneeze-free summer:

<b>What is it?</b>	<b>What does it do?</b>	<b>Where from?</b>
Echinacea (one tablet daily)	Boosts the immune system	Widely available from health food shops & chemists
Vitamin C – 2,000 mg daily	Boosts the immune system	Widely available from chemists and supermarkets
Luffa	Provides relief from symptoms	Available as a tincture, tablets or nasal spray from health food shops
Locally produced honey	Relieves symptoms	Paynes Southdown Bee Farm or other local suppliers – available in local shops
Cypress, eucalyptus and juniper essential oils	2 drops of each in a bowl of hot water provide an excellent steam inhalation to clear a blocked nose	Chemists, health foods shops and specialist aromatherapy oil suppliers
Euphrasia tincture – as an eyebath for sore, itchy eyes	Add 3 drops to cooled, boiled water and bathe the eyes regularly	From Helios Homeopathic Pharmacy (01892 537254 <a href="http://www.helios.co.uk">www.helios.co.uk</a> )
<b>Homeopathic remedies</b>		
Allium cepa, euphrasia & sabadilla	For sneezing, sore runny nose and itchy eyes	Sold as <i>Pollenna</i> by Nelsons from most chemists
Kali Bich 30	For blocked, painful sinuses with gluey, stringy mucus	Available from most chemists
Mixed pollens 30	An effective remedy for hayfever symptoms where pollen-allergy is the main problem	Available from Helios Homeopathic Pharmacy (see contact details above)

New Era Combination H	A mix of remedies effective in the treatment of hayfever	Available from health food shops
<p>Homeopathic remedies should be taken when hayfever symptoms appear. They can be taken up to 3 times a day if required, and are safe to give to children.</p> <p>If you already consult a homeopath, they can supply the remedy most appropriate for your symptoms.</p>		