



## Integrative Treatments for Seasonal Allergies

Many are bothered by allergies, especially in Sonoma County when it is windy. Some only need occasional treatment, while others have 3-4 months of misery.

If the medications are working then please continue to use them, they have good evidence and are relatively affordable.

If you are not getting the results that you need or prefer other natural ways to treat your allergies, here is some information to help.

### Natural Ways to Treat Allergies

- Environmental changes: avoid exposure/rinse off offending stuff.
  - Nasal Rinses (see handout on SRFMR.org website)
  - Avoid being outside at peak pollen time (5-10am) or windy days
  - Shower at the end of the day or after exposure
  - Safe Room with HEPA filter (air filter)
  - Some with severe allergies wear a mask to avoid exposure.
- Anti-inflammatory Diet: helps your immune system have less to work on
  - Simple: avoid foods or drinks you know to be problematic, add foods that are rich in phytonutrients and antioxidants. (Green Leafy Vegetables)
  - Common problematic foods: dairy, caffeine, gluten
- Supplements
  - Quercetin: Best taken in the morning as prevention, once you have allergy symptoms not so helpful. Is a Bioflavonoid that inhibits mast cells.
    - Dose: 400-600 mg tablet, 1-3 times daily
    - Often comes packaged with Nettles
  - Magnesium: Mineral that helps relax bronchial smooth muscles. Good for asthma or bronchial symptoms.
    - Dose: Start at 250 mg daily, increase to 400-500mg daily as tolerated.. Mag Oxide covered by PHP. If irritating to digestive system (diarrhea), switch to Mag Glycinate.
  - Stinging Nettle: Plant with antihistamine activity
    - Dose: 300-350mg of freeze dried extract in capsule, 1-3x daily.
    - Often comes packaged with Quercetin
  - Omega 3: Marine or Fish oil. Make sure heavy metals are filtered out.
    - Dose - Up for debate... suggest 1000 mg EPA + DHA per day.
    - Recommended Brands - Swanson (\$5.99 for 150 softgels 180 mg EPA + 120 DHA) Carlson's, Viva Natural Ultra Strength Omega 3 ( \$30 for 180 softgels, 700 EPA, 240 DHA/per 2 softgels).
  - Probiotics: Dose = 20 billion CFU per day. *L. plantarum* No. 14, *Bifidobacterium longum* BB536, and *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* GG are species studies in clinical trials with evidence of clinical effectiveness.
  - Vitamin D: start at 3,000iu of Vitamin D3, or if you have had a level checked, optimum is between 50-60.
  - Vitamin C: 1000-2000mg a day has been shown to help allergies
- Acupuncture - also has been shown to be helpful.
- Stress Management – has been shown to be helpful (see Stress Management handout)
- Sleep: Adequate sleep is necessary for immune health. (see Sleep Hygiene handout)

Many of the medications and supplements treat more than one symptom but use this to help guide your treatment choices.

Symptom	Medicine	Supplement	Lifestyle
<b>Runny Nose</b>	Nasal Steroids Nasal Cromolyn*	Nettles Quercetin Butterbur	Nasal Rinses Shower Air filter/safe room
<b>Itching/Watery Eyes</b>	Antihistamine drops Optical Cromolyn*		Nasal Rinses Shower Air filter/safe room
<b>Sneezing</b>	Oral Antihistamines	Nettles Quercetin Butterbur	Nasal Rinses Shower Air filter/safe room
<b>Asthma</b>	Oral Montelukast Inhaled Cromolyn	Magnesium Omega 3	Nasal Rinses Shower Air filter/safe room
<b>Helps all symptoms</b>			Sleep Vitamin D Omega 3 Oils Stress Management Probiotics Anti-Inflammatory Diet

\* need to take before exposure

### How the medications work

1. Nasal Steroids
  - a. To decrease runny nose: Work by decreasing inflammation
2. Antihistamines
  - Non-Sedating options - all shown to be equal. Loratadine\*, Cetirizine\*, Fexofenadine\*.
  - Take in the morning on an empty stomach.
  - Sedating options: Chlorpheniramine can take at night.
3. Eye drops -- often, separate treatment is needed for itchy, burning, watery eyes. Rx: Ketotifen drops\*, olopatadine drops\*, azelastine drops\*
4. Cromolyn: Need to take before exposure  
Has many forms: Eyes, Nose, Inhaled
5. If Asthma is worse with allergies:  
Montelukast Sodium  
\*= Covered by PHP.