

## Experts warn against allergy alternatives

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Experts at the University of Washington and other colleges warn that patients seeking alternative allergy treatments should not quit standard medications.

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America estimates that 40 percent of U.S. citizens have tried alternative medicine and doctors say patients are increasingly asking about alternative treatments for seasonal allergies, USA Today reported Thursday.

However, medical experts warn that abandoning scientifically proven forms of treatment in favor of untested alternative methods could be dangerous.

"Anyone with moderate to severe allergies and asthma should absolutely remain on standard, conventional forms of medication. Asthma in particular is a potentially life-threatening condition, especially in children," said Barak Gaster, associate professor of medicine at the University of Washington.

Michael Zacharisen, associate professor at The Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee said alternative allergy treatments are largely lacking in scientific data to back them up.

"There is not good, rigorous scientific research showing that they are effective and safe for allergies and asthma," he said.

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