

8 drug-free tips to fight spring allergies

April 10 2023, by Cara Murez



Spring allergies can be brutal, and many—but by no means all—sufferers reach for synthetic medications to combat their symptoms.

Many others want something more natural, however.

"These allergies cause unpleasant symptoms such as runny noses, sneezing, itchy eyes and nasal congestion," said Dr. Jo Reed, an expert in allergy, asthma and immunology from Ochsner Health in Louisiana.

"Of course, you can take various synthetic medications for allergies, but many sufferers prefer to use natural remedies," Reed said in an Ochsner news release.

Here, Reed offers some options:

An herb known as **butterbur** is one option, according to several scientific studies. In one, Swiss researchers found butterbur is a strong antihistamine that can control [hay fever](#).

"It also does not cause drowsiness, unlike some over-the-counter allergy medications," Reed said.

Green tea contains a substance that can block certain allergic responses in the body, according to studies by Japanese scientists. It may reduce sneezing and itchy eyes.

Spicy food, including cayenne pepper, could help. It contains capsaicin, known to reduce [nasal congestion](#). Also, allicin, found in garlic, is an anti-inflammatory that can reduce swelling and inflammation.

A **neti pot**, with its long, thin spout, can help clear clogged sinus passages. Fill the pot with warm, [sterile water](#) and salt before tilting your head back and allowing the solution to enter your nasal passages through a nostril. Continue until the solution flows out of the other nostril.

Seasonal allergies can cause dryness in your nose and sinuses, leading to

congestion and swelling.

"One great way to counteract the dryness is to use a **humidifier**," Reed said. "This device releases [water vapor](#) into the air and helps moisturize your dry nasal and sinus passages, resulting in less congestion and discomfort."

Eucalyptus oil, from the leaves of eucalyptus trees, has been found in studies to reduce inflammation-caused allergies. Add a few drops to a bowl of steaming water and breathe in the vapors.

Your [vacuum](#) should have a **high-efficiency particulate air filter**, so you can rid your home of pollen with regular cleaning. These filters effectively minimize the amount of symptom-causing pollen inside your house.

You can also wear **protective clothing** to reduce your pollen exposure when outside, Reed advised. Slip on sunglasses, a wide-brimmed hat and long pants to keep pollen from getting on your skin. Remember to remove your clothes at the end of the day and shower to remove any pollen.

More information: The American College of Asthma, Allergy and Immunology has more on [seasonal allergies](#).

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