

The naturopathic advisor



Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with experts at CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine) to answer some of your burning health questions. This issue, you asked:



Q How can I avoid type 2 diabetes?

There is plenty that most of us can do to reduce our risk of developing type 2 diabetes with help from natural therapies.

Exercise

Exercise is a crucial part of preventing type 2 diabetes. One of the easiest ways to regulate blood sugar levels, which lies at the core of type 2 diabetes, and combat obesity is to exercise regularly. Start by taking the stairs instead of the lift.

Re-think your diet

Swap fast food and ready meals for cook-from-scratch fresh wholefoods, preferably organic. Ditch artificial ingredients and steer clear of 'low sugar' options.

Keep the sugar 'hit' of your meals low by eating foods which have a low glycaemic load (GL). They enable the body to better moderate insulin, blood sugar and energy levels.

Avoid:

- Sweets, chocolate, sugar, honey.
- White flour bread, pasta and pastry products, such as cakes and biscuits.
- White rice.
- Fruit juice, fizzy drinks or soda pop.
- Alcohol.
- Lots of fatty meats and dairy.

Eat:

- Meals or snacks with some fat and protein, never carbohydrate only.

- Cinnamon and nutmeg – to replace sugar.
- More fibre – in the form of fresh vegetables and plenty of salad greens.
- Lean protein – legumes, such as chickpeas, lentils and beans, fish, mushrooms, quinoa, brown rice and rolled oats.
- Tree nuts – preferably raw and unsalted.
- Onions and garlic, fenugreek tea and ginseng tea.

Address stress

Stress is a contributory factor in the development of metabolic syndrome, which often precedes diabetes.

Clean up your act

Our 'toxic burden' can increase susceptibility to illness and overweight. Reduce exposure by eating organic food where possible,

and opt for natural personal care and household products.

Get help

There are nutritional supplements and herbal preparations which can improve glucose tolerance, insulin response, or support vascular integrity, but please don't self-prescribe. A qualified natural health practitioner can help create a tailor-made dietary and lifestyle plan to support your health, taking into account your health history, current state of health, medications and their side effects, personal weight loss or lifestyle goals, and any drug-nutrient interactions of which you need to be mindful.



Your question has been answered by Naturopath, Gemma Hurditch, for CNM. For information on CNM training in a range of natural health therapies, visit www.naturopathy-uk.com

HERBAL HEALTH

Understanding the onset of hay fever

Alison Cullen, Nutritional Therapist and Education Manager at A.Vogel, explains why we can develop hay fever later in life.

So, you seem to have developed all the symptoms of hay fever – the runny nose, itchy eyes and scratchy throat – but you don't have hay fever, so surely it must be something else? A summer cold perhaps, or maybe just working too hard and feeling a bit run down?

Well, the truth is, if all the symptoms point to hay fever then it's likely that this is the problem, even if you've never suffered from symptoms before. Sometimes, people can be genetically predisposed to developing hay fever, but the allergy might just not have been triggered yet. If you suffer from other allergies or problems such as asthma and eczema, then you may be susceptible to hay fever too.

So, what kind of things can trigger hay fever?

EXTERNAL FACTORS

It seems that every year, the newspapers claim that this is the worst ever year for hay fever – and there is actually some truth in the scaremongering! As

problems like pollution and climate change worsen, hay fever is actually becoming more problematic. Foreign plants and animals are often introduced to the UK – whether by accident or on purpose – and they can sometimes cause problems when they get here. For hay fever sufferers, one particularly problematic plant is ragweed. This plant is native to North America and is infamous for causing hay fever symptoms over there. It may be that you aren't sensitive to the plants normally found the UK, but if ragweed has made its way to your local area, you could be having an allergic reaction to that.

We know that pollution can trigger worse hay fever symptoms, so if you've recently moved to a new city – particularly a bigger one – then it may be that the pollution and higher pollen counts here are triggering symptoms for the first time.

If your diet has changed, this might be contributing to your newly found hay fever



symptoms. Diets high in inflammatory foods such as meat, dairy, alcohol, caffeine and sugar can make you vulnerable to problems like hay fever. These foods often contain histamine or trigger a histamine release in the body, the same chemical released during an allergic reaction.

If you can identify what triggered the development of hay fever, then you might be able to prevent your symptoms next year by fixing this trigger. Focusing on diet and lifestyle is probably your best option, as there isn't much you can do about pollution or climate change in the short term!

If your hay fever symptoms are stubborn, then you could try a herbal remedy that contains a complex of hay fever-fighting herbs and don't have the same side-effects you often find with conventional hay fever treatments.