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How to Relieve Hay Fever Naturally?

by Michelle Sanchez -

Naturopath, Nutritionist and Medical Herbalist for CNM College of Naturopathic Medicine.

Hay fever is a common condition that occurs in spring and early summer due to the pollen from trees and certain grasses; and also in late summer and early autumn due to ragweed.

It is caused by an immune system reaction that is triggered when a person comes into contact with airborne particles such as pollen or dust mites. The immune system produces antibodies, which signal the release of histamine, a natural chemical produced by the body. Histamine causes sneezing, itchy eyes, nose and throat, watery eyes, congestion, sinus pressure and discharge from the nose.

Ways to relieve hay fever

- **Eat plenty of fresh, organic fruits and vegetables that are rich in antioxidants and vitamin C.** Vitamin C acts as a natural antihistamine and also helps reduce inflammation in the body. Broccoli, cauliflower, peppers, citrus fruits, kiwi fruit, tomatoes and strawberries contain lots of vitamin C.
- **Increase your intake of anti-inflammatory foods** including garlic, onions, ginger, leafy greens, omega-3 (avocado, flaxseeds, chia seeds, flaxseed oil, sardines, mackerel), walnuts, almonds, lentils and chickpeas.
- **Supplement with probiotics**, especially the Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium strains of bacteria, as they help to repopulate your gut bacteria and reduce an overactive immune response which is linked to allergies and hay fever.
- **Supplement with quercetin which is a key antioxidant with anti-allergic and antihistamine properties** that helps to balance the immune response and prevent it from overreacting to allergens such as pollen. Food sources of quercetin include apples, berries, broccoli, grapes, peppers and red onions. Green tea and black tea also contain quercetin.



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What is the best exercise for perimenopause?

By Grainne O'Driscoll,
Rude Health
fitness expert

Well that depends on the woman. Perimenopause can last anything from two to 14 years, most commonly around four years, and while some women have hardly any symptoms of menopause, others may endure sleeplessness, joint pain, anxiety, pelvic floor pain, incontinence, weight gain and the list goes on, so much so that getting through a regular day requires monumental effort without adding exercise into the mix. However, along with the many physical benefits, exercise is known to help with our sleep as well as our mental health, so it is worth finding something that suits.

A brisk 30-minute walk five days a week, if possible early in the morning, provides us with daylight, which can help sleep as well as vitamin D production for our bone health. Walking can benefit our cardiovascular and mental health.

Weight bearing exercises

and resistance or weight training help maintain muscle strength and bone density and protect us from osteoporosis. Studies have shown that developing lean muscle can help reduce hot flushes and night sweats.



Pilates can help us maintain and build muscle, improve posture and core strength as well as being beneficial for our pelvic floor muscles. Don't be shy about asking your teacher about this.

Yoga along with the physical benefits, can help women reduce stress and is therefore good for our bone health and sleep. Watch out for 'yoga for menopause' classes.

Sea swimming – the cold water can help boost our mood and immune system as well as reduce inflammation and you can enjoy the camaraderie with fellow dippers. If you can't face the sea – a blast of the cold shower is good too.

Gráinne O'Driscoll runs Grá For Fitness offering public, private and corporate Pilates, yoga and fitness classes

