

# Naturally good health

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SUMMER 2021

FREE  
MAGAZINE

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Nathalie Lennon opens up about  
hitting rock bottom and living  
well for your body and mind



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# SEASONAL HEALTH GUIDE



HEALTH STORES  
IRELAND UPDATE



**Take the opportunity to get your health in check during the warmer weather, suggests Gerald Colder, President of Health Stores Ireland.**

**S**ummer is coming and, with the prospect of less restrictions than we've been living with, this year more than ever I think we should all make the most of this most expansive time of the year.

Foreign travel may not be an option yet, but we'll certainly want to make the most of the opportunity to enjoy this beautiful country of ours and take some time away from the day-to-day grind and the pressures that lockdown has imposed on all of us. I know that the two breaks I took in the west of Ireland last year were among the most relaxing holidays I've ever enjoyed and this year again, I'm sure I'll be as excited getting into my car to drive to the far flung reaches of our green island as I've ever

been when boarding a plane to Greece!

So, how can we make the most of the opportunity?

Perhaps make the most of the loosened restrictions to catch up with some of the family and friends we've been missing. Doing this, within the bounds of safety, can go a long way to reforge the bonds with others that form such an important part of our physical and emotional support networks, which the pandemic's restrictions may have eroded.

Eat healthily by making the most of the fresh, seasonal, local produce that Ireland is so renowned for, no matter what part of the country you find yourself in. Doing this in tandem with upping your outdoor activity levels can go a long way to helping us shake off the sense of inertia that lockdown has brought into some of our lives.

Make the most of the healing power of nature. Whether you spend your time trekking up the mountains or walking our beaches and woodlands, contact with the natural world can provide a solace to many of life's woes and, if



we've ever needed it, that time is now. Allow time spent in nature to allow stress to abate.

Don't forget your natural holiday supplies, from digestive enzymes to natural sunscreens, from your C, D and zinc to keep those immune systems optimal to natural insect repellents and ointments for cuts and grazes. Be prepared and don't let the little things spoil the break.

And above all, have fun! We've all come through a tough time and there's never been a summer when it was more important to take time out, recharge and look forward to better times ahead.

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# How to relieve hay fever naturally

Michelle Sanchez, Naturopath, Nutritionist and Medical Herbalist for CNM College of Naturopathic Medicine, offers tips on managing seasonal allergies.



**H**ay 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 as the immune system deems these substances as harmful to the body. The immune system then produces antibodies, which signal the release of histamine, a natural chemical produced by the body to rid itself of harmful substances. Histamine causes sneezing, itchy eyes, nose and throat, watery eyes, congestion, sinus pressure and discharge from the nose; the same symptoms experienced when someone has hay fever.

Only some people suffer with hay fever due to an imbalance in the immune system. Allergies are often triggered by medication such as antibiotics and anti-inflammatory drugs. They cause inflammation in the gut and diminish beneficial gut bacteria; the gut plays a key role in immune health and the way the body responds to allergens.

## 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 helps reduce inflammation in the body. Broccoli, cauliflower, bell peppers, citrus fruits, kiwifruit, 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.

- Avoid foods that damage the gastrointestinal system, including sugar, refined carbohydrates (bread, pasta, pastries, pies), gluten-containing foods, pasteurised dairy, fried foods and processed foods.

- 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.

- Eat more fermented foods like sauerkraut or kimchi as they are rich in beneficial gut bacteria.

- 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.

- Bromelain is an enzyme (naturally found in pineapple) known to reduce hay fever symptoms as it decreases inflammation and swelling in the sinuses. Bromelain also comes in supplement form as a capsule or tablet.

- Check your vitamin D levels. Vitamin D deficiency is

linked to poor immune function and allergies.

- Medicinal mushrooms contain a substance called beta-glucans, which stimulate the immune system to work more efficiently and promote the growth of beneficial bacteria in the gut. Reishi mushroom in particular helps to reduce the release of histamine and calm down an overactive immune system. Medicinal mushrooms come as a fresh whole food, as a powder (which can be added to foods or drinks) or in a capsule.

- Bee pollen is an excellent immune booster as it contains anti-inflammatory, antiviral, antimicrobial and antifungal properties. It's also rich in vitamins A, C and E, and powerful antioxidants, including resveratrol and lycopene. Bee pollen is sold as natural granules which can be added to foods or smoothies or eaten on its own.

- Homeopathic remedies are highly effective for treating hay fever and reducing symptoms. Remedies specific for hay fever include *Allium cepa*, *Arsenicum album*, *Arundo*, *Euphrasia* and *Natrum muriaticum*.

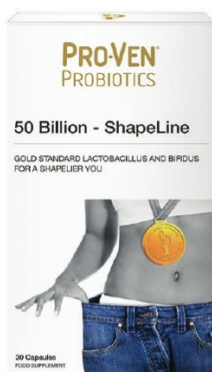
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