

ONE MAN'S FOOD IS ANOTHER MAN'S POISON

We seem to be living in an age of growing awareness and incidence of food sensitivities, be they allergies or intolerances. Are these issues getting worse or is this really a form of self-diagnosis that is just 'all in the mind'? Could it be that the more we hybridise, modify and process, add chemicals and deplete the soil, then the more we struggle to break down food, absorb and utilise nutrients and open the door to food reactivity? Sounds plausible doesn't it!

Take wheat and gluten for example. We've all heard of the custom of 'breaking bread', but I'd challenge anyone to 'break' a loaf of white elastic that passes for bread at the local store. For the want of quick baking, increased shelf life and low cost we often consume a product that bears little resemblance to what was traditionally enjoyed.

How do you know if you do have a sensitivity? Reactions can be very different. A true allergic response can be very rapid, e.g. eating a peanut can send someone into an anaphylactic shock.

Other antibody reactions such as an IgA response may take place up to 72 hours after exposure, whereas an IgM reaction can be later. Diagnosis therefore can be problematic, testing for one kind of response doesn't rule out another.

Diagnosing Celiac Disease, an autoimmune condition, requires specific testing, detecting non - Celiac gluten sensitivity is more subjective though certain testing may indicate an issue.

Relying on symptoms can also be problematic given not only the time delay before reactions may take place but also the fact that symptoms can be extremely diverse. Whilst it could be bloating and gas, it could also be brain fog and mood swings.

So, what can we all do to help ourselves?

- Pay attention to your body and start to notice symptoms that may recur after certain foods are eaten.
- Rotate foods to at least limit exposure to those that may be problematic. Overexposure can promote problems down the line.
- Identify foods that you 'can't do without', they can often be ones we need the least!
- Eat real food, unprocessed and organic, nature intended for food to be our friend not foe.
- Adopt a big bang approach and phase out common offenders such as wheat, dairy and soy. Corn, rice, eggs and nuts may also typically cause issues. Be systematic with phasing foods back in if you do exclude for a time.
- Nourish your digestive system with foods that heal.
- Consider testing if issues are difficult to resolve.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR SEASONAL ALLERGIES

The prevalence of allergies is on the rise and the UK has some of the highest prevalence rates of allergic conditions in the world, with over 20% of the population affected by one or more allergic disorder.

Allergic reactions begin in your immune system. An allergy happens when the immune system mistakes a harmless substance for a harmful one. In someone suffering with hay fever their immune system reacts to pollen by producing antibodies that "attack" the allergen.



Here are some natural remedies to calm your immune system's response and relieve the symptoms associated with seasonal allergies:

Take a Probiotic

A strong immune system starts with a healthy gut. More than 80 percent of your immune system is stored in your gastrointestinal tract! Research has linked probiotic supplement use to reduced risk of allergies.

Reduce inflammation

Chronic inflammation is associated with increased incidence of allergies. Increasing the amount of anti-inflammatory foods you eat and cutting out pro-inflammatory foods will help. You can also take anti-inflammatory supplements such as turmeric and omega 3 fish oils.

Consume Quercetin

Quercetin is a flavonoid naturally found in plant foods and can help to decrease the release of histamine. The best sources of quercetin include berries, red grapes, apples, apricots, tea, onions, broccoli, kale and green tea.

Swap table sugar for raw, local honey

This old remedy has been disputed, but raw honey, as well as tasting delicious, contains bee pollen, which is known to ward off infections and boost immunity. The theory is that consuming local honey will expose your body to local pollen and decrease your allergic response.

Use essential oils

Eucalyptus and chamomile oils have been associated with decreasing the symptoms of hay fever by soothing the irritation in the upper respiratory passages such as the nose, sinus and throat. Add a couple of drops of these oils to your diffuser or do a steam inhalation if you're congested.