

# Nutrition to Ease Seasonal Allergies

Spring has finally begun to settle in and with this season comes warmer weather, gorgeous plants, and POLLEN!! While welcome to some, spring can be a horrific few months for individuals who suffer from seasonal allergies. While over the counter medication is often recommended there are also a few things we can do with our nutrition to help alleviate the detrimental effects of allergies.

**1. Increase Water Consumption:** The better hydrated we are the easier it is for our bodies to rid themselves of excess mucous and sinus drainage. Water intake will also help the nasal secretions remain thin and less viscous which will assist in the elimination of the excess secretions.

**2. Increase Your Vitamin C:** This water soluble vitamin naturally lower histamine levels which are elevated during sinus infections. Histamine is a chemical released by our bodies during allergic reactions. One can get their daily intake of vitamin C from foods, such as red bell pepper, citrus fruits, strawberries, and tomatoes. Some severe allergy sufferers can supplement with vitamin C. The recommended intake is 2000mg of Vitamin C per day. Always consult your physician before starting any supplement.

**3. Ensure Essential Fatty Acids Consumption:** It is extremely important to get these fats from the diet because we can not make them in our bodies. Essential fatty acids (like Omega 3 Fatty Acids) help fight the inflammation that accompanies an allergic reaction. Like vitamin C you can choose to supplement with Omega 3 Fish Oils or Flax Seed Oil or you can acquire these compounds from dietary sources such as salmon, mackerel, walnuts, and flax or chia seeds.

**4. Avoid Excess Alcohol and Tobacco:** Both alcohol and tobacco can increase the release of histamine, which is already elevated during an allergic response. Alcohol can also make the swelling of the sinuses worse which can lead to increase sinus pressure and headaches.

**5. Get Quercetin Every Day:** Quercetin is a plant derived compound known as a bioflavonoid. This compound has been shown to stabilize mast cells and helps prevent these cells from releasing histamine. Quercetin is also an antioxidant and can help reduce free radicals in the blood stream. You can find Quercetin in foods such as apples, broccoli, citrus fruits, and parsley.

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