



220 Parker St. Warsaw, IN 46580

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# Feel Your Best: Combatting Spring Allergies

## What Causes Allergies?

Your body's immune system is a powerful shield against foreign invaders and abnormal cells, but sometimes it identifies danger where it doesn't exist. When external substances such as pollen or pet dander enter your body, the immune system might identify them as harmful, even though they aren't.<sup>1</sup> Antibodies produced by your immune system attack these allergens, and they release a chemical called histamine into the nose, eyes, and lungs.<sup>2</sup> As a result, you might have reactions such as inflamed skin, congested airways, or irritated sinuses and nasal passages.

In severe cases, allergic reactions can be life-threatening. However, for most people, allergies are nothing more than a nuisance. Nearly 8% of people suffer from "hay fever," the overreaction to outdoor allergens.<sup>3</sup> Luckily, the annoying effects can be eased through natural practices.

## Research Effective Herbs

In the same way that nature causes the sneezing, coughing, and itching associated with allergies, it also produces herbs that can offer relief. These are a few herbs that we recommend for easing your misery as your allergies flare up:

### Stinging Nettles

Stinging nettles, or just nettles, are aptly named because their fine hairs cause a stinging sensation when they meet human skin. However, studies have shown that this plant also contains anti-inflammatory properties that can soothe the lungs and nasal passages.<sup>4</sup> When this herb is crushed, you can avoid the stinging hairs and put the resulting powder in a tea, tincture, or even capsules. Additionally, it can be used in skin-soothing topical creams.

### Butterbur

If you would prefer to avoid the sedating effects of most over-the-counter allergy medicines, butterbur is a viable alternative. In fact, researchers have discovered that butterbur works just as well as common medicines taken for seasonal allergies.<sup>5</sup>

### Mullein

As an expectorant, mullein helps the body release phlegm and congestion, which makes it perfect for supporting your wellness amid seasonal allergy problems. People with all kinds of lung issues rely on mullein to aid in reducing inflammation and relaxing the muscles of the respiratory tract.<sup>6</sup> You can find it in liquid form or capsules, or you can drink mullein tea.

### Rosemary

While rosemary is often used as a culinary staple, recent studies have also indicated that the rosmarinic acid it contains has both anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects.<sup>7</sup> By adding more rosemary to your diet or taking rosmarinic acid supplements, you can reduce your seasonal allergy symptoms.

## Opt for Acupuncture

Some allergy-relief practices require a long-term investment in your body, mind, and spirit. This is why many people choose acupuncture for allergy relief. One review of several different studies found that people who adopted acupuncture regimens experienced positive results for seasonal allergy relief.<sup>8</sup>

Acupuncture addresses your allergy symptoms and the root causes of your body's reaction to allergens. A comprehensive evaluation and plan can target imbalances, resulting in overall support for your immune system. Acupuncture is a very safe practice, so you do not have to worry about side effects.

## Drink Warm Tea & Water

Dehydration is the last thing you want to deal with on top of your spring allergies because it can make your symptoms feel worse. It is always important to consume a sufficient amount of liquids during the day. During allergy season, however, staying hydrated becomes even more crucial because ingesting extra fluids can reduce the mucus in your nasal passages.<sup>9</sup> In addition to your normal water intake, experts recommend two to three cups of plain warm water when you wake up in the morning and about two more in the evening.<sup>10</sup> This expert recommendation is useful because warm liquids create steam, which is also good for relieving your symptoms and helping you clear your sinuses more easily.

## Stock Up on Essential Oils

Aromatherapy uses concentrated aromatic compounds to stimulate your body and encourages positive responses to manage some of your body's allergic reactions. Oils can be used in diffusers, baths, or topical creams to support your wellness. One of the most popular essential oils for easing allergies is peppermint oil because it has a strong scent that produces anti-inflammatory effects.<sup>11</sup> One study found that frankincense oil may also counteract allergic reactions when diffused into the air or diluted in a carrier oil and applied behind the ears.<sup>12</sup>

If you pursue aromatherapy for allergy relief, be sure to discuss your practices with experts who can give you tips and help guide your decisions. Never use essential oils without first doing dedicated research on the best options for you and your family

## Conclusion: Ease Spring Allergies

While there is no definite cure for allergies, you can relieve the symptoms by researching and adopting holistic practices that will support your wellness. To make the wisest choices, consider diving into an in-depth program that will teach you about some of the most useful practices. For example, becoming a Certified Aromatherapy Specialist or a Master Herbalist will give you the tools you need to thrive and provide recommendations to others.

At Trinity School of Natural Health, we offer online certifications for these areas of study and more, so you can pursue a holistic, natural education from wherever you are. If you'd like to learn more about one of these programs, you can contact an enrollment specialist today by calling 800-428-0408, option 2.

### REFERENCES

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