

The Diet-Hayfever connection  
+more accurate allergy testing

Is a food allergy behind your hayfever or inhalant allergy? Undetected, hidden food allergies are a very common underlying cause contributing to hayfever symptoms. In fact, nearly everyone with classic hayfever also has accompanying food allergies that they are probably unaware of. While the conventional scratch testing method is only accurate for detecting inhalant allergies (such as pollen, grass, dust, mold, etc.) it is only 20% reliable for detecting food allergies. Most food allergies tested by this method are missed. When such food sensitivities are accurately uncovered by other testing methods (such as ELISA, RAST or the Self Pulse Challenge Test) individuals with hayfever consistently experience improvement across the board not only for food allergy symptoms but for hayfever symptoms as well. The most common IgE type of food allergy testing detects only immediate-type food allergies. Rarely are people tested for IgG type reactions, which account for delayed reactions and less severe food sensitivities. A delayed reactive food eaten two days ago can be causing joint pain and a suppressed immune system today, and the IgG test never knows it. Some of the more common yet unrecognized food allergies include: milk and dairy products, wheat, corn, soybeans orange, beef and chocolate. Although a person can be allergic to anything, especially to those foods they like and eat the most. At one point in my past, I tested as allergic to peas as I was to wheat. When these food allergens are avoided and then rotated with different foods, hayfever symptoms also improve even when the person is again exposed to the offending pollen or grass trigger substance.

Accurately identifying any food allergy / sensitivity is not a life sentence to avoid the offending food. In fact, the moral of the allergy testing story is to eat more variety. A mono-diet of eating the same thing day in and day out eventually sensitizes the immune system to that substance and it begins to over react. Peanuts, for example are no more inherently allergenic than are almonds; it’s just that many kids are raised on peanut butter. And don’t fool yourself: cereal for breakfast, a sandwich for lunch and pasta for dinner may sound like great variety; but that person likely just had three doses of wheat in a row! Usually, if the allergenic food is strictly avoided for 30 days, one can return to eating it, but only on a limited, rotational basis; the standard rotation is once every four days. So after clearing the immune system from a once reactive food, it can usually safely be eaten a couple of times per week. Definite exceptions to this apply, such as anaphylactic and other severe immediate-type reactions, gluten intolerance, etc. This encourages more varietal eating, which not only helps minimize allerginicity, but also is the best way to cover yourself nutritionally. A food allergy diet should be expansive, not restrictive. I have over the years observed too many people who after identifying their wheat allergy, commence eating rice in the same fashion, day in and day out. Guess what? They eventually develop an allergy to rice.

Any of these safe, natural and effective approaches to hayfever relief and allergy management are a good first line of defense for clear and smooth sailing though spring and, a stronger immune defense for winter.