

Terry Talks Nutrition



All-Natural Treatments for Allergies

“cure” could be worse than the original problem!

There are *natural solutions* to your allergy problems. You don't have to choose between suffering from your allergy or suffering from drug side effects. You have clinically studied and effective options. But first we should take a look at what causes allergies in the first place.

Allergies: A Case of Mistaken Identity

Allergies are the result of your immune system making a mistake. The basic role of the immune system is to tell “self” from “not self” and destroy *anything* that might be harmful, such as bacteria or viruses, while leaving our own tissues alone. However, sometimes our immune system overreacts, and goes into a red alert state over something that is not really dangerous. This is why some people can safely eat peanuts, while others experience dangerous allergic reactions, including anaphylactic shock, and can even die from eating just a tiny bit of peanut butter.

Fortunately, most allergic reactions are not as severe as anaphylactic shock. For most people, exposure to allergy triggers such as dust, pollen, mold, and animal dander results in annoying, but not life-threatening, symptoms. Allergy sufferers most commonly experience red, itchy eyes, a runny nose, coughing, sneezing, rashes, or even wheezing or shortness of breath (asthma).

Avoiding exposure to known allergy triggers will prevent an allergic reaction. Using air purifiers, removing carpets and heavy curtains, closing windows during high allergy trigger seasons, and choosing pets with low allergenicity can make a big difference. In severe cases, some people even decide to relocate to an area with fewer allergy issues. However, this is not always practical. Natural options to reduce the immune system's overreaction to allergies can effectively reduce symptoms without the side effects of conventional drugs.

Traditional Chinese Medicine

Western medicine, the system of medicine

with which you are probably most familiar, considers health and disease two different states. The emphasis is on control, and on changing the environment, to protect the body. To treat illnesses, doctors prescribe synthetic drugs, use disinfectants, monitor temperature and humidity, and attempt to stop the disease by changing what is happening to the body. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), which is over 3,000 years old, looks at health and wellness differently. The primary goal of Traditional Chinese Medicine is to create wholeness and harmony within a person, allowing the mind/body/spirit to *heal itself*. In TCM, health and illness are in a balancing act – the internal systems of the body have to overcome outside challenges. As long as that is accomplished, you will stay healthy.

In TCM, the *Six Pernicious Influences* — Heat, Cold, Wind, Dampness, Dryness and Summer Heat — are external forces that can invade the body and create disharmony in the mind/body/spirit. Exposure to one of these influences for a long time, or when you are weak, can cause you to develop an illness. If these influences are extremely strong, what could have been minor, such as a cold, becomes severe – you develop pneumonia.

“Wind” and “heat” are the two primary forces which negatively influence the immune system and respiratory function (the two body systems associated with allergic reactions). Wind is like the wind

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Key Words

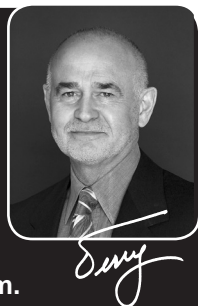
allergies, allergy, traditional Chinese medicine, TCM, allergic, pollen, dander, histamine, sinus, hives, itching, rash, sneezing, coughing, post nasal drip, Chinese peony root, sweet wormwood, licorice, siler, summer cypress, Dong Quai, mold, asthma, antihistamines

The daffodils are blooming, and the trees are budding, leaving you with a sense of dread. The kittens are rolling around with a toy mouse, and the dog is chasing her tennis ball. You try to get away as quickly as possible. The thought of vacuuming or dusting your home makes you want to cover your nose and hide. Pumpkins are in the fields and the autumn colors are at their height, and you cannot wait for the big frost to kill it all and winter to begin. You are an allergy sufferer.

Not only is it uncomfortable, it is extremely frustrating to experience allergies when those around you can enjoy nature or a comfortable home. Allergies aren't just miserable—they interfere with relationships and activities. And allergies can lead to more serious physical problems, like asthma attacks, sinusitis, bronchitis—and even pneumonia—because the irritation and mucous production can set up the perfect breeding ground for a bacterial infection.

Unfortunately, many of the drugs used to treat allergies are themselves unhealthy, causing unpleasant side effects. Some cause insomnia, dizziness, nausea, increased heart rate and blood pressure, and difficulty with urination. Others interfere with the ability to think clearly or drive. They dry your mouth, make you sleepy, start nose bleeds, and give you nightmares. This is a case where the

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outdoors – it refers to symptoms that come and go, without warning. Heat causes redness, speeds things up (agitation and restlessness) and frequently affects the skin (itchy red rashes). When supporting these body systems, practitioners of TCM advise nourishing the blood, promoting blood circulation, expelling and stopping wind, clearing away heat, removing heat from blood, and eliminating dampness (swelling, fluids and mucous).

The following is a list of herbs used in aiding the immune system and respiratory function in TCM, and to treat allergies and respiratory problems. These herbs have been used for thousands of years in a very precise medical system. Each addresses one or more of the negative influences:

- **Chinese Peony root** (*Paeonia lactiflora*): nourishing blood, promoting blood circulation
- **Siler** (*Saposhnikovia divaricata*): expelling and stopping wind
- **Sweet Wormwood** (*Artemisia annua*): clearing away heat and removing heat from blood
- **Summer Cypress Fruit** (*Kochia scoparia*): clearing away heat and eliminating dampness
- **Dong Quai** (*Angelica sinensis*): nourishing blood and promoting blood circulation
- **Chinese Peony** (*Paeonia veitchii*): promoting blood circulation and removing heat from blood
- **Licorice root** (*Glycyrrhiza uralensis*, *inflata*, and *glabra*): clearing away heat and centralizing other herbs in this formula

When East Meets West

These same herbs have also been studied in the Western model of medicine, and there has been research to reveal how they work to stop allergy symptoms. For example, licorice and summer cypress stop production of inflammatory compounds in the body (IgE, nitric oxide and prostaglandins). Peony helps relax tight or spasming airways, and has been shown to reduce allergic reactions. Siler is an antioxidant and helps reduce inflammation. Sweet wormwood and dong quai have benefits for balancing the immune system, reducing the mechanisms that result in overreactions common in allergies.

Allergy Formula Clinical Study Results

Practitioners of TCM in China tested these herbs in a formula on 205 people suffering from allergic rhinitis or hives (itchy red welts on the skin). [Zhen JA, Chen D.Y. Evaluation of an anti-allergic natural formula based on TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine). Results of a clinical trial. Luzhou Medical College. China.] The participants took the herbal combination TCM formula three times a day, and healthcare practitioners examined them and evaluated their symptoms. At the end of the study, the researchers reported **over 85% effectiveness** in reducing allergy symptoms in the participants. Additionally, there were *no significant adverse effects*, and no drowsiness, dry mouth or dizziness as is commonly experienced when using typical allergy medicines.

Conclusion

It makes sense to try a natural formula validated by both Eastern *and* Western schools of medicine for allergy symptoms. However, if you have seasonal issues, make sure you start using this herbal combination a few weeks **BEFORE** the onset of problems. It will still work if you wait, but you will greatly reduce symptoms and your immune system's reaction to the allergen if you are prepared in advance. For example, if you live in northern areas and tree pollen is a trigger, start using the formula when

the days start to get longer in February so you are ready with spring arrives.

If you have year round allergies, start supplementing anytime, and within a few weeks (or sooner) you will notice *definite* improvements. If you have serious, life-threatening allergies (bee stings, peanuts, etc) please *do not* forgo your emergency medication (like EpiPens). Keeping rescue medication handy at all times protects you and those you love. However, for daily use to help keep your immune system from overreacting, this modern herbal formula based on ancient Chinese wisdom will make a meaningful difference in your life. You won't believe how good you can feel. You might even want to pick a bunch of wildflowers to celebrate!

Terry recommends a formula with these ingredients. Look for it at your local health food store:

Proprietary Complex 1,000 mg
Chinese Peony (*Paeonia lactiflora*) Root,
Siler (*Saposhnikovia divaricata*) Root,
Sweet Wormwood (*Artemisia annua*)
Whole Herb, Summer Cypress (*Kochia scoparia*)
Fruit, Dong Quai (*Angelica sinensis*)
Root, Chinese Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza uralensis*)
Root, Chinese Peony (*Paeonia veitchii*)
Root, Chinese Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza inflata*)
Root, Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) Root

When in doubt, always consult your physician or health care practitioner. This column is to provide you with information to maintain your health.