

# *Real Common Sense*

April 2022

## Hay Fever

Hello, this is Dr. Ellen. In this month's '*Real Common Sense*' newsletter, I will focus on an all-too-common problem experienced by many this time of year, hay fever, which can also occur year-round. I have been able to help many hay fever sufferers achieve a significant decrease or elimination of their complaints. This is because the Ellen Cutler Method (ECM) uses a multimodality approach to 'neutralize' the factors underlying the problem.

By the way, if you didn't get a chance to see my previous newsletters, you can find them on my website, [www.drellencutler.com](http://www.drellencutler.com).

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### What is Hay Fever?

The word *allergy* brings to the minds of many the seasonal discomfort of a runny nose with sneezing and itchy, swollen eyes. Their hay fever symptoms can last for weeks or even months of the year. The person suffering from this, also referred to as allergic rhinitis, dreads the coming of the 'allergy season'. This is when the immune system overreacts to specific particles (aka allergens) in the air that are breathed into the upper airway. Symptoms are experienced during times of the year when those pollens are airborne. However, if they are reacting to indoor or other airborne particles to which they are sensitive (such as dust mites, animal dander, and mold spores), they may have symptoms throughout the year.<sup>[1]</sup>

Allergic rhinitis is a condition in which the nasal mucous membranes become inflamed and irritated. It is the most common type of chronic rhinitis and affects 10–20% of the general population. The prevalence of allergic rhinitis increases with age. Severe allergic rhinitis can impair your quality of life, sleep, and work performance.<sup>[2,3]</sup> In addition to frequent sneezing accompanied by a runny, stuffy, itchy nose and postnasal drip, other symptoms can include watery, itchy, and irritated eyes, dark circles under the eyes, coughing and a sore or scratchy throat. Recurrent headaches and fatigue are common with prolonged allergen exposure. There may also be sinusitis, ear infections, asthma, and eczema.<sup>[4]</sup>

Within minutes of inhaling an allergen to which you are sensitized, the immune system overreacts and causes the release of histamine. This causes plasma to leak from local capillaries with resulting swelling and the secretion of mucus, causing itching, nasal congestion, rhinorrhea (i.e., a runny nose), and sneezing. With repeated exposure to the allergen, the amount of the allergen necessary to cause histamine release becomes less. Thus, hay fever sufferers become more symptomatic despite decreasing levels of the allergen.<sup>[5]</sup> In addition, lengthened pollen

seasons (+20 d) and increased pollen concentrations (+21%) across North America have been seen between 1990 and 2018.<sup>[6]</sup> Hay fever can be associated with chronic, non-allergic rhinitis or rhinosinusitis, particularly with individuals having year-round symptoms that seem to worsen during the allergy season. Sometimes, a person diagnosed with allergic rhinitis instead has non-allergic rhinosinusitis that waxes and wanes.<sup>[5]</sup>

Conventional medical practitioners usually recommend medications that will act as antihistamines, decongestants, and anti-inflammatories to decrease symptoms. Patients are advised to avoid the identified allergens. Immunotherapy is sometimes tried through a series of injections, sublingual tablets, or drops.<sup>[7]</sup> Immunotherapy can be helpful in decreasing symptoms and medication use, but requires multiple visits to the doctor's office, repeated injections over at least 3 years, and the risk of systemic allergic reactions.<sup>[8]</sup> Most importantly, it also does not address the causes underlying the reactivity.

\*I have had the great fortune of seeing significant improvements in the health of many of my patients diagnosed with hay fever and similar conditions using the Ellen Cutler Method (ECM).\*

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## Natural Approaches to Allergic Rhinitis<sup>[5]</sup>

### 1. Energetic Testing and Correction

I use ECM energetic testing to reproducibly identify the sensitivities responsible for allergic rhinitis. I often find many more sensitivities that are responsible beyond the commonly described hay fever allergens, oftentimes, sensitivities to foods. One study found that 63% of patients with allergic rhinitis were sensitized to common food allergens.<sup>[9]</sup> In those with chronic non-allergic rhinitis or rhinosinusitis, I often find the individual has sensitivities to bacteria or viruses.

What is most remarkable with ECM is that not only are we able to identify these sensitivities, but ECM can also desensitize individuals to these allergens/sensitivities. The desensitization, referred to as 'clearing', often brings long-lasting results. This gives many people a superior alternative to medications, immunotherapy, and avoidance of the allergens, which is especially important when the allergens, such as mold and mold spores, are almost impossible to avoid.

### 2. Adrenal Support

Perhaps the most frequently identified concern I find when testing those with allergic rhinitis is the need for adrenal support. Intense, prolonged stress can lead to loss of adrenal reserve function. This in turn can lead to increased allergic symptoms. There are several common stressors of the adrenal glands. These include exposure to a high-glycemic diet of refined sugars and carbohydrates, caffeine, nicotine, and other stimulants, alcohol, food allergies, artificial sweeteners, and lack of exercise.

### **3. Diet, Carbohydrate Restriction and Digestive Enzyme Blends**

My ECM testing often finds that a vegetarian or vegan diet is healthier for the person tested than a non-vegetarian one. This can also have an impact on the person's hay fever. In fact, in one study, allergic rhinitis and asthma rates were generally lower in vegans compared to non-vegans.<sup>[10]</sup> Also, there are foods that are high in histamines and can increase symptoms in some hay fever sufferers. These include fermented foods, alcohol, packaged meats, aged cheeses, legumes, and citrus fruits.<sup>[11]</sup>

I usually find that individuals suffering from seasonal hay fever have fewer, less intense symptoms when they avoid carbohydrate-rich foods, especially during the high-pollen seasons. In addition, I recommend taking a full-spectrum vegetarian digestive enzyme blend with meals, especially one containing ample amounts of the various sugar-digesting enzymes, such as ProEnzol® "Sugar/Starch DigestEnz" This will enhance the breakdown of carbohydrates.

### **4. Proteases and Herbal Enzyme Blends**

Proteases (aka proteolytic enzymes) are protein molecules that act as enzymes, catalyzing the breakdown of other proteins. Proteases are made in the body to help digest proteins, but they also play other important roles in the body. These 'systemic' effects include increased tissue healing, enhanced immune function, and breaking down biofilms, which can protect potentially harmful microorganisms in the gut.<sup>[12,13]</sup> Proteases are also made by certain plants and microbes. I have found microbial proteases to be the most effective form, as found in ProEnzol® "pHysioProtease". It is important to use proteases in between meals when systemic effects are desired, as is the case for hay fever.

Two other supplements I recommend for hay fever sufferers are ProEnzol® "Nose & Throat", which contains systemic digestive enzymes and other phytonutrients such as vitamin C, zinc, and synergistic herbs; and ProEnzol® "Soft Tissue", which contains vitamin C, calcium, a proteolytic blend, and other phytonutrients. Again, each should be taken in between meals.

### **5. Probiotics**

Probiotics are of benefit in several immune-mediated and allergic diseases, including allergic rhinitis. Probiotics help balance the gut microflora, favoring the beneficial bacteria in the gut, especially Bifidobacteria and Lactobacilli bacteria.<sup>[14,15]</sup> I have found ProEnzol® "Probiotic 18" effective in decreasing symptoms and increasing the quality of life of hay fever sufferers.

### **6. Oolong tea**

Oolong tea seems to have anti-allergy properties. This is likely attributable to the fermentation process. This changes the catechins in the tea and seems to make them more anti-allergic than green tea. For tips on preparing oolong tea, please see Dr. Leo Galland's article.<sup>[16]</sup>

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Be well, be healthy, and remember...

“Health is a state of complete mental, social and physical well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

– World Health Organization, 1948

Dr. Ellen

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