

Treat Common Diseases with Ayurveda & Yoga

TREAT COMMON DISEASES WITH AYURVEDA & YOGA Volume I & II

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ALLERGIES

Allergies occur when a hypersensitive immune system reacts to a common or unusual substance. In some people it is hereditary, but one can also develop an allergy at any time in his or her life. Any substance, whatever its origin, is a possible allergen. Foods, chemicals in foods, medicines, and environmental factors, including pollen, parasites, dust, animal hair, and chemical toxins, for example, can all cause allergic reactions almost anywhere in the body.

Ayurveda sees *ama* (toxins) and low immunity as the primary causes of most allergies. *Ama* can settle at the digestive level or in the various tissues, with different symptoms at each level. *Ama* toxicity aggravates blood and Pitta, or it can aggravate Kapha, with different symptoms.

HAY FEVER

Most of us are familiar with the symptoms of hay fever, or seasonal allergies, whether we have them ourselves or know someone else who does have- runny nose, sneezing, itching eyes, scratchy throat, and itching, swelling, or hives on the skin. Often, people seem to have a cold. With more severe reactions, one might suffer from asthma and other breathing difficulties, aches and pain, gastrointestinal reactions (for example, diarrhea), or rapid or irregular heartbeat.

Seasonal allergies can occur anytime, but they occur most often during spring and early summer, when plants and trees are flowering and producing pollens, the most common allergens. Seasonal allergies are also fairly common in the fall - many people are sensitive to the molds produced by decaying leaves and other plants. Animal feathers, hairs and dust cause similar symptoms.

Ayurveda sees hay fever as a Kapha-Pitta disorder; however, people with a Vata constitution suffer most from it, because it is also due to immune disorder and hypersensitivity of the nervous system:

Symptoms & Dosha predominance-

- * Vata aggravation often produces headache, insomnia, and anxiety.
- * Pitta aggravation produces yellow nasal discharge, feverish feeling, burning eyes, and skin rashes.

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* Kapha aggravation produces whitish sputum and heaviness and dullness in the body. If the sinuses are congested, there may be a dull headache around the region of sinuses.

General Treatment

[A] Home Therapies

In all cases, nasal medication is recommended for controlling and preventing seasonal allergies. Use medicated sesame oil made with licorice, agaru (aquilaria agallocha), bilva (aegle marmalos), kantakari (solanum xanthocarpum), lotus, and nutgrass. Then put one drop in each nostril at bedtime. Use this for 4 weeks.

Preparation of Medicated oil - 1 part of herbs + 4 parts of oil +16 parts of water. Boil over low flame for 4 to 8 hours till all water evaporates.

[B] Herbs

For Vata & Kapha - Take trikatu (dry ginger, black pepper and long pepper powder in equal amount) 20 mgm.+ basil 250 mgm. + 10 mgm. cloves, camphor, and coriander each. It is advisable to take this mixture 3 times a day with warm water. Start before hay fever season. & take the mixture till the season is over.

[C] Diet

Avoid heavy foods, cold drinks, and dairy products (including cheese and yogurt), that increase Kapha and decrease digestive fire. Also, follow diets that rebalance your own pattern of doshic imbalance.

Vata treatment

Home Therapies

* Follow the " Unit increase/unit decrease " *Rasayana* treatment described in the section on asthma.

Pitta Treatment

* During an attack with Pitta aggravation, take a tea made with licorice, cardamom, and santalum album. For making tea - take equal proportion of dried herbs + 4 times water. Boil it. Reduce till 1/4th.

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For Pitta pacification, bitter herbs & blood cleansing herbs like dandelion, barberry or echinacea should be taken. Take any of these herbs in dose of 1 to 3 gms. a day for 2 weeks.

Home Therapies

- * Inhale medicated vapor made with water, basil leaves (holy basil, if possible), and eucalyptus oil.
- * Do *nasya* (nasal medication) with coconut oil 2 times a day. Put 2 –3 drops of oil in the nose at bedtime.

Kapha Treatment

[a] Herbs

- * Take 50 mg. of camphor and cloves and 1 gram of basil twice daily for 2 months.

[b] Prepared Medicines

- * To ease Kapha aggravation, take 2 tablets of guduchi, three times daily with a tea made from basil, cloves, and camphor for 2 weeks.

[c] From the Ayurvedic Physician

An Ayurvedic physician would recommend medicated therapeutic vomiting to balance Kapha and prevent the recurrence of seasonal allergies.

[d] Yoga and Breath Therapy

It is common for hay fever to start with symptoms that are similar to colds and sinus problems. To prevent symptoms such as runny nose, sneezing and congestion, practice nasal cleansing with water (*jala neti*) regularly to purify the entire upper respiratory tract and prevent recurrence of allergic attacks. Use a special pot with a spout - a *neti* pot - available for this purpose, and make nasal cleansing a regular part of your daily hygiene.

Deep breathing or regular practice of [*anuloma viloma pranayama*] can also prevent attack.

When hay fever allergies are chronic, practice (*Kapalabhati*) regularly to increase the patient's stamina.

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Appendix- 1

Self massage (Auto massage) -

should be done by every individual, to maintain the health. Every person should use oil that is suitable to him according to his own constitution as explained above. There is saying in Kerala that person should use small amount of money on massage oils than giving large money to the doctors for curing diseases. This confirms that every day *abhyanga*, can prevent various diseases.

Requirements-

Massage oil,

Hair oil,

Hot water bath,

Cleansing powder.

Procedure-

Usually different oils are used for head and for the rest of the body. Oils, which are cool in potency, should be used for applying on the head, while those, which are warming in nature, can be used for general massage. All most all oils since they are unctuous, heavy and warm act as Anti-Vata. Sesame oil is the best oil for Vata constitution and if properly processed, has anti-oxidant qualities.

Warm the required oil in water bath to 39 C. Sit on stool or chair in warm bathroom or other comfortable room. Pour the warm oil in your palm, so that you know the temperature of the oil.

1. First apply the oil on top of the head and massage the same for a minute. For massaging the scalp use the fingertips. Then massage the face, front and back of the neck and head with the palm. Give special attention to the head marmas like *adhipati*, *seemanta* and *shankha*.

2. Then take other oil suitable for the body massage, and start massaging the external ear by holding right ear lobe in the thumb and index finger. Use the tip of the index finger to massage the innermost part of the ear. Do the massage in the same manner to the left ear also.

1. Then start massaging the arms with back and forth movements and circular movements over the joints.

2. Now apply the oil to the chest and abdomen. Pour little oil in *nabhi marma*. On abdomen gentle circular movement should be used. Give gentle massage to the marma like *nabhi*, *basti* and *hridaya*.

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5. Then apply the oil to the soles of the feet and then carry out the massage to the lower limbs. It is better to leave the oil on the body at least for 15 to 30 minutes.

Then take warm bath or shower. Use cleansing powders of *vacha*- calamus or powders of lentils to take away the excess oil from the skin.

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