

## Managing your 'Allergy', the Ayurvedic way.

'Allergy' is simply defined as "a damaging immune response by the body to a substance, especially a particular food, pollen, fur, or dust, to which it has become hypersensitive."

The said damaging immune response can vary from simple reactions like red eyes, itchy rashes, hives, runny nose, shortness of breath, swelling, sneezing etc to a serious episode of anaphylaxis. The underlying mechanism involves immunoglobulin E antibodies (IgE), part of the body's immune system, binding to an allergen and setting in motion a series of events which leads to the disproportional release of inflammatory chemicals like 'histamine' resulting in an acute inflammatory condition.

At the outset, the allergen may seem the villain. Withdraw the erring foreign body and you are disease free. And that is indeed the easiest way to go about treating an allergy. But why? What makes your body hypersensitive to a common place entity like flower pollen, while the person next to you seems fine? Therein lies the intricacy of looking at "Allergy" from an Ayurvedic Perspective.

The 'Trisdoshas' (functional entities) and 'Sapthadathus'(structural entities) are the Ayurvedic currencies when dealing with any condition that deviates from Health. Allergy is identified as a vitiation of Kapha-Pitta doshas in combination. It translates to poor quality circulating blood and a build up of endotoxins. Here we have rounded up a few simple measures you could adopt to manage your allergies on a routine basis.

### **1) Avoid day sleep and night vigil.**

While we all may pitch in favor of overthrowing a 'timebound' life, reality is, the "Circadian rhythm" exists for a reason. The night sets in and the day dawns for a reason. Melatonin has a say in when and if you should sleep. The very reason why you wake up feeling groggy after sleeping the entire day, while you wake up refreshed after sound sleep at night. So, have your beauty sleep and let it be at night!

### **2) Boost your metabolism.**

Ayurveda considers the Liver as the seat of the digestive fire. The Liver along with Spleen are responsible for optimum metabolic activity. Make hepato-protective food like whole grains, millets, fruits like grapefruit, cranberries, grapes, gooseberries, fibre rich green leafy vegetables, broccoli, carrots, beets, spirulina, herbs like thyme, oregano etc a part of your regular diet. Remember, a whole fruit is always better than its juice alone for your body.

Herbal supplementation with Phyllanthus niruri is recommended.

### **3) Detoxify your blood.**

Ayurveda offers a wide variety of herbal combinations in this spectrum. Consuming lots of water and following a moderate exercise regime is central to your detoxification process. Soaked raisins on an empty stomach is a good detoxifier. Restrain from food and activities that increase the 'heat' in your body like overtly spicy and fried food, old and refrigerated food, saltines, pickles, alcohol; overeating, starving, binge drinking; undue mental stress and strain. This restores balance to the kapha-pitta elements in the body.

### **4) Boost your immunity**

Supplement your daily diet with nuts, flax seeds, milk, honey and fruits especially citrus ones for improving immunity. Gooseberry based herbal supplements are recommended.

### **5) Counter the inflammatory process**

A regular intake of turmeric along with a combination of Dried Ginger, Black Pepper and Long pepper in Physician advised doses for a fixed period is an effective remedy for hypersensitivity induced inflammatory reactions.

6) Ayurveda strongly advocates **regular purgation** for the balance of Pitta dosha in your body. Seemingly a simple affair, it will go a long way in managing your allergic reactions.