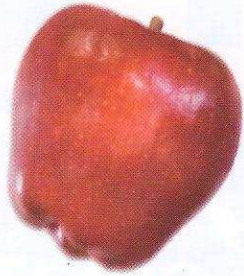


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Allergy Alert

Drug-Free Solutions

It has been an incredibly wet and soggy winter for us in the Valley of the sun. On the bright side, all that rain has given us an amazingly colorful spring. The lush, green mountains and wild flowers have been so picturesque.

Unfortunately, for many residents, all that beauty can wreck havoc on the body by way of allergy attacks. If this year's allergy triggers seem more intense to you, you're not alone. But help is on the way. Phoenix Woman magazine asked several experts to come together to offer their opinions, advice, suggestions and drug-free remedies to help you finally find some relief. — PW

Remedies In The Air

by Joy Corland

When it's 115 degrees outside and you are sweating bullets upon returning to your "too-warm-for-comfort" home, you don't hesitate for a second—you turn on your air conditioning. But the moment you do, you may be unknowingly breathing allergen-rich air, aggravating allergies and stirring up dust that you didn't even know you had.

Many people don't realize that leaks exist in most homes, and it's the air conditioning system that's at the root of a home's indoor air quality. "Whenever your AC system turns on, it creates a vacuum effect designed to circulate the air through the air handler," says Todd Russo of Residential Energy Efficiency Improvement Specialists (REEIS). "The attic space is an extremely polluted environment that is very unhealthy," he adds.

Naturopathic physician, Dr. Phil Wazny, who practices in Scottsdale and Ahwatukee with Integrative HealthCare, says 80 percent of his

Signs You May Have Allergens in Your Home

- Home is constantly dusty
- Air conditioning registers are consistently dusty
- Dust comes out of the registers
- Filters need changing more frequently than once per month

Source: www.REEISHome.com

patients suffer from mild to severe allergy symptoms. "Allergies, at their most severe, can cause disruptions to people's sleep with post nasal drip and congestion, and because sleep is a major foundation when it comes to health, this is a significant side effect," says Dr. Wazny. "Disrupted sleep or a lack of sleep can lower your immune system and increase the propensity for other diseases."

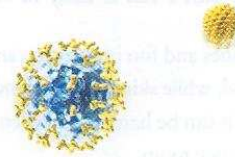
Extended exposure to allergens, like those which may be in constant circulation in your home, can cause serious problems. "People who have allergies over longer periods of time can suffer from nasal polyps, increased risk of respiratory infections, asthma and pneumonia," says Dr. Wazny.

He also says long-term exposure can cause hyper-sensitivity leading to auto-immune conditions because the immune system is constantly trying to fight off the environment. Dr. Wazny advises removing as many of the allergens as possible. "For those with severe allergies, working to eliminate allergens in the home helps sufferers; it can have dramatic effects," he says.

Some companies provide duct sealing services to help clean the air as much as possible. REEIS takes it a step further by offering home energy audits to determine where air leaks exist, including doorways, attics, recessed lights and windows. These services can help provide some relief and may be worth looking into.

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Joy Corland is a freelance writer and mother of two who resides in Scottsdale.

INFOLINK: www.REEISHome.com
www.IntegrativeHealthCare.com



Allergy Immunity Boost

by Dr. Jeff Donahue

The question for me, as an alternative health practitioner, is why the body has such a reaction. The immune system is designed to protect our bodies from things that can cause damage, like bacteria and viruses. But why do things like pollen, pet dander and dust cause allergic reactions? And, why do some suffer, while others can be exposed all day long and feel nothing?

There is a growing body of evidence showing imbalances within our digestive systems that can be a major cause of allergies. As much as 70 to 80 percent of our immune system is located within our gut (our digestive system), as this is where the external environment meets the inside world—this is where the protection is most needed.

The tissue of the intestinal walls is made to selectively filter what is allowed into our bodies. If you think about it, there are only two natural ways that things can get into our bodies—through breathing and eating. Breathing shares part of the digestive system, the throat. Whatever particles are inhaled will eventually make it into the gut. It is within our digestive tracts where potentially harmful things are first identified by the body, as this is where most of our immune system resides.

In my experience, a key factor in allergies is what's called "leaky gut." That's where small openings within our intestines allow larger particles of food into the bloodstream. The immune system doesn't recognize these larger molecules, so it identifies them as "foreign invaders" and attacks them. Pollen, pet dander and dust qualify as large molecules. If they find themselves in our bloodstream, we can definitely have an allergic reaction.

What Is An Allergy?

DEF: al-ler-gy (noun)
An abnormal reaction of the body
—www.dictionary.com

"An allergy is an over-reaction of your immune system to what it perceives to be a foreign invader... it is immediately recognized, and the body mounts a defense, symptoms such as sneezing, runny nose, itchiness and inflammation."

— Dr. Jeff Donahue, chiropractor, acupuncturist and nutritionist