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A Springtime Histamine Primer

a neurological side effect. However, antihistamines do not address the root causes of histamine overload, and when used routinely, they diminish the body's ability to break down histamine. Antihistamine drugs block transport systems for detoxing pathogens such as mucous, coughing, sneezing, and watery eyes. The drugs also block diamine oxidase (DAO), a natural enzyme that breaks down histamine.

Histamine is a signal for resources when the body is in trouble from pathogenic exposure (pollen, bug bites, plants, and chemicals) and injured tissues. Histamines trigger blood vessel permeability where an issue occurs. As a result, mucous or body fluids (including blood) enter the area so the immune system can isolate offensive invaders. A similar sequence happens with certain foods or when gut bacteria are out of balance. Excess histamines are released in the digestive system to capture and flush out pathogens or allergens. The symptoms of these instances include increased mucous/phlegm, inflammation, reflux, or watery diarrhea.

Histamines are also ingestible. They form naturally in fermented foods, processed meats, aged cheese,

dried fruits, and alcohol. Citrus fruits, strawberries, raspberries, tomatoes, spinach, and eggplant are common mast cell triggers. DAO enzyme supplements taken with meals helps food-related triggers. DAO supplements do not enter the bloodstream; they break down histamines during food consumption.

To support the body's natural DAO enzyme levels, take cofactors found in omega-3 fatty acids, a whole food organic multivitamin, and vitamin B complex. Avoid DAO blockers, such as alcohol and black and green tea. Hypoglycemia and dehydration increase histamine secretion, so metabolic health and hydration benefit your ability to tolerate histamines. When you manage your triggers, your overall histamine reduces.

Quercetin, an antioxidant from onions and apples, helps prevent mast cell releases of histamines without blocking DAO. It partners well with vitamin C for histamine intolerance. Take 500 milligrams of quercetin and 500 milligrams of vitamin C together three times daily when exposure to allergens is high, and reduce your dose when possible. Other supplements may help you as well, such as luteolin (25 milligrams, three times per day), stinging nettle

(500 milligrams, three times per day), Pycnogenol (100 milligrams, three times per day), butterbur (50 milligrams, three times per day), bovine colostrum (for gut health) and vitamin D to prevent and heal histamine-related health issues. Work with one supplement at a time to avoid interactions and confusion.

Many histamine-related problems are inherited, but diet and supplements can help significantly. For springtime allergies, a saline sinus rinse (with purified water) works wonders to thin mucous and flush out pathogens. Hopefully, this "primer" helps you determine if change or additional research is in your future.

Abundant Blessings! Shellie Rosen, Ph.D., Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM)®, DOM, L.Ac.

Histamines are involved in many helpful biological processes, but in excess, they are problematic. Such is the case when environmental allergens trigger painful sinus symptoms due to a large release of histamines. Mast and basophil immune cells secrete histamines. They are concentrated where the body contacts the outside world, such as the upper respiratory and digestive systems. However, these immune cells reside throughout the body, meaning histamine overload can occur anywhere, including in the brain.

Histamine is involved in wakefulness, sleep, attention, memory, mood, balance, and appetite in the central nervous system. Those who take an antihistamine often experience improved focus or sleep as



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