



Information Sheet – Allergies

I came across this article in the magazine Healthy Way – from which I have learned a lot. I hope you will find this of interest. This is an extremely informative magazine and they have their own web site www.healthywaymagazine.com.

"Whilst allergies are prevalent amongst the UK population, the following case studies show how simply their unpleasant symptoms can be alleviated.

Carrie

Carrie was 11 and had several inexplicable allergic attacks every week. They were not regular, did not appear to be triggered by anything that could be spotted by her parents and were annoying enough to require a visit to the doctor. She experienced violent sneezing, runny eyes and nose, and a residual wheeziness. No allergies were pinpointed by the hospital tests, so the mystery remained, along with the irritatingly persistent interruptions to her life.

Carrie's complementary practitioner put her onto Devil's Claw tincture and a complex containing Luffa. She took the remedies regularly for six months to balance her immune system. Within days of taking them, the inexplicable attacks had stopped and ten years later she has not had a relapse. What has become clear is that her digestive system is sensitive, reacting to certain foods erratically when she is under stress.

This kind of digestive problem can be at the root of many problems, and is very difficult to pinpoint by tests, as it is not a real intolerance or allergy to a specific food but a general weakness of digestive powers, which shows up when the body is emotionally or mentally stressed.

Devil's Claw helped by rebalancing the immune system so that it didn't trigger quite so easily. Echinacea can also be used in this way, to calm an overactive immune response, but Devil's Claw has the benefit of being strongly anti-inflammatory as well so it helps with allergic-type symptoms, which tend to involve inflammation.

The complex containing Luffa helped by calming the eye and nose reactions. It reduces itching, running and stuffiness in the eyes and nose, in addition to easing wheeziness in the chest. It does this extremely quickly and is a great favourite with hay fever sufferers as a result. It can, however, be used all year round for those with a tendency to wake up sneezing every morning, or those who react to animals or dust mites on a regular basis.

Mhairi

Mhairi was in her thirties and had started throwing out an alarming looking rash on her neck and chest quite frequently. She hated the way it looked and therefore feared it coming on, which probably triggered it even more as it was quite obviously a stress reaction. She was particularly highly strung, worrying constantly about all sorts of things that might seem trivial to others. The body produces a chemical called histamine



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as part of its reaction to stressful circumstances. This dilates blood vessels so that immune cells can get to an area under attack faster. That's the useful thing it does. On the down side, it tends to make the skin red and rash-ridden, as if plagued by nettle rash (prickly heat). It can also make the bronchi constrict, causing wheeziness.

To treat Mhairi, Urtica (Nettle) tincture and vitamin C were the remedies of choice and worked very well. She also found that avoiding coffee reduced the severity of the reaction. Coffee can be a trigger for many skin reactions and even hot flushes, so it's always worth cutting it out and seeing what happens without it. Urtica and vitamin C are both excellent antihistamines, and Urtica is particularly good at calming symptoms that look like nettle rash – anything red and bumpy, especially if it's itchy. Drinking nettle tea several times a day may help but the tincture is stronger and will make more of a difference. People with arthritic symptoms often find it helpful too, as it removes uric acid from the joints, reducing pain.

Mick

Mick had suffered from eczema as a child. Although he hadn't had any trouble with it for years, in his thirties he started to throw out an allergic rash when he came into contact with certain cleaning products. He also found that particular washing powders caused his skin to break out when he used the clothes and bed linen that had been washed in them.

His condition was identified as contact dermatitis, and initially he had to avoid the products that triggered it. He was given a supplement programme of Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs) and zinc, and the tinctures of Devil's Claw and Viola tricolour. This calmed the skin reaction which gradually started to heal. As he had had eczema it was likely that his digestive system was not overly strong, and that he was intolerant of dairy products. He was given the stomach bitter, Centaurium, and this, together with a strict avoidance of dairy products, made his digestion 'poetry in motion' compared to its previous state, and the skin reaction gradually died away over several months.

EFAs are useful because they help skin to heal and have a mildly anti-inflammatory effect. Also, people who have or have had eczema tend to lack them. Zinc is great for the immune system and helps skin to heal. Devil's Claw, as noted before, is wonderfully anti-inflammatory, and calms an immune system that is over-reactive. Viola tricolour tincture is splendid for skin conditions of any sort, because it reduces skin inflammation and improves transport to and from the skin. This means that nutrients are taken to the skin and wastes removed from it very efficiently, which generally aids more or less any skin complaint. Centaurium, a bitter tincture, stimulates the body to provide more of its own digestive enzymes, which assist the proper breakdown of food."