

## Foods for Allergies and Windy Spring Conditions

Happy Spring to Everyone,

As most of you have noticed with the change in seasons to spring we have been experiencing much more wind. With the strong winds comes many interesting health issues from a Chinese medical perspective. This includes increased irritability and allergies. Besides acupuncture and Chinese herbs, I have included some dietary recommendations as well.

I have noticed that there is many more people that are irritable these days from drivers to short tempered store clerks. A contributing factor to this is the strong winds we are experiencing. The American diet and stressful work conditions contribute to the effects of these windy conditions. It taxes our liver, spleen and blood Qi. The liver stores the blood and the spleen creates the blood from our diets. If we aren't eating the proper foods we deplete the energy of our blood causing a deficiency and an internal wind condition. Think of it this way, when a hose is first turned and the water starts flowing, air in the hose starts moving out of the end causing a wind. When the hose is full of water wind can no longer be felt coming out of the end of the hose. This is the same as the energy of you blood being full. When only a small amount of water comes out of the hose, wind flows with it. This is equivalent to your blood's Qi being deficient.

Interestingly, as the spring winds pick up it disturbs the internal wind created by a deficiency of blood Qi. This can lead to irritability and short tempers. The good news is that this can be remedied with Chinese herbs and nutrition. I recommend the following foods to help build the energy of the blood and Qi in general: beats, red bell peppers, alfalfa sprouts, artichokes, shiitake mushrooms, spinach, summer squash, watercress, algae, dang gui and most beans to name a few.

The wind also spreads pollens and other allergens. The wind attacks our lungs and can lead to many sensitivities to trees, grasses, weeds, dust, pet dander and other. What affected us last year might not be what affects us this year. Besides acupuncture and herbs the following article discusses some great foods you can add to your diet to help battle allergy season.

### TOP FOODS FOR ALLERGIES

Springtime is near and, unfortunately, this time of year brings a lot of misery to people in the form of red, watery eyes, runny noses, and sneezing. Pollen levels increase and, thus, increase allergic symptoms. There are many who suffer from allergies throughout the whole year from offending allergens such a animal dander and dust mites.

One way to help decrease the severity of your allergies is to boost your immunity with immune-enhancing foods. These foods will have high levels of **vitamin C, magnesium, beta-carotene, and quercetin.**

### Vitamin C

It has been shown to decrease production of histamine, thus reducing an immediate allergic episode. It is a natural antihistamine. It helps relieve allergic symptoms and prevents inflammatory reactions.



Green and red peppers, strawberries, kiwi, oranges, potatoes, cabbage



### Beta-Carotene

When converted to Vitamin A, it helps boost immunity and keeps the respiratory system working optimally. It also is a powerful antioxidant.

Sweet potatoes, kale, spinach, carrots, winter squash, collard greens

### Magnesium

May reduce constricted airways in asthma by relaxing the muscles around the bronchial tubes. It can buffer the acidic stage of an allergic reaction. Some think a deficiency in magnesium can release histamine.



Almonds, spinach, avocados, oysters, seeds, peanuts, buckwheat



### Quercetin

Rich in bioflavonoids. It can reduce allergic reactions by having an antihistamine effect. It also decreases inflammation

Apples, cranberries, grapefruit, grapes, pears, spinach, kale, cabbage

In addition, **ginger** is a natural antihistamine and decongestant. It may provide some relief from allergy symptoms by dilating constricted bronchial tubes.