



Soothe the Savage



Tips and solutions for seasonal allergies

Season

by LORRI ANDERSON, MS Homeopathy, CCH

My favorite allergy client was almost six when he accidentally ended up at his mother's appointment with me. He was just adorable in denim jeans and a cowboy-ish plaid shirt, with a long, thick swath of straight black hair over well-fringed saucer-like eyes. And a finger wriggling very seriously all the way up his right nostril. I was enchanted. (And his mother was embarrassed.)

Why a favorite?

Timmy' still had that wonderful quality common to children but rare in adults. He knew how to make himself feel better, and he felt no reason to hold back. Once I told him and his mother he could do whatever he wanted in my office, they both relaxed enough to get all the way through Mom's case. Then we spent just a couple minutes on him. Do you know what remedy he got for his allergies? There is a big clue in my initial observations of him. (Answer at the end of the article.)

However delightful I found Timmy on that first meeting, he was not delighted. Like virtually all the roughly 50 million people in the United States with allergies, he was suffering. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America states that allergies affect as many as 30% of adults and 40% of children. Allergic rhinitis alone (allergies with nasal symptoms) affects 6.1 million children and 20 million adults.





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An allergy is a hypersensitivity reaction to a generally-benign influence. The body has an exaggerated immune response to a foreign substance that most people are able to tolerate. The offending substance (allergen) can be inhaled, injected, eaten, touched, or acquired in several ways, and, overall, allergies include reactions to: food and drugs, bites and stings, metals, latex, and contacted or inhaled substances such as pollens, molds, dusts, and danders.

When those allergens tend to provoke reactions during regular cycles of the calendar, we call them seasonal allergies. Most seasonal allergies come from inhaled pollens or other plant parts and create symptoms in the nose, face, and respiratory system.

Natural allergy approaches

We are fortunate to have homeopathic remedies made from many common allergens, and plenty of sufferers find relief by simply using the remedy made from the substance(s) to which they know they are allergic. Fair enough. If a remedy works in an individual case, then it is homeopathic to that case, regardless of how we got there. But technically, the approach of using the remedy made from the allergen is isopathy. (Isopathy means *same* suffering, while homeopathy stands for *similar* suffering.) And hopefully, homeopathy can do better.

We do better with allergies by doing the same thing we do in every other homeopathic case. We match a full, well-rounded picture of the totality of symptoms for an individual to a full, well-rounded picture of one of our remedies. Because seasonal allergies are intense, most of our clients are able to give good descriptions of symptoms and provide a strong information base. They want relief immediately, if not sooner. And we help find that relief by understanding the way the individual experiences allergies.

Generally, I'm pretty easy on clients. Yes, our objective in the moment can be symptomatic relief, *NOW*. But I do use the intensity of seasonal allergy complaints to convince folks that they will want to embrace some type of deeper healing before the next year's allergy

season. As soon as the current allergy season passes, each client should seek out a deeper, more wholistic approach.

Of course, my expertise is in homeopathy. To get to core improvements, we work together on homeopathic care of the whole person—including their tendency towards seasonal allergies alongside other chronic complaints and symptoms of their general way of being—what many call constitutional homeopathy.

But other alternative health modalities can also rebalance an individual. I encourage all allergy sufferers to seek out the tools and approaches that suit their individuality(ies). At a minimum, almost any of us can try to reduce overall toxic load by tackling a whole body cleanse.

Still, many of my clients continue to have some allergy symptoms in the year following the start of chronic homeopathic care. Typically, the allergy symptoms have been greatly reduced and may not require any intervention. And additional subsequent improvement is definitely possible. But even if an individual has been symptom-free for some years, it is a good idea to stay vigilant regarding any potential return.

The common and the uncommon

Individualizing—crafting that full, well-rounded picture of the entire person—is always the heart of skillful homeopathy. And it is the uncommon, like Timmy's finger up his nose, which allows us to do that. But we can't entirely overlook the common symptoms, either. Almost all cases of seasonal allergies will include plenty of itching, stinging, burning, tickling, dripping, drying, red, sneezing, mucus-y symptoms. And every remedy included in this article covers those types of symptoms.

It is the associated details, the unexpected twists and turns, the what-goes-along-with these allergy symptoms that will help us choose an effective remedy for the individual. It is also the what-you-do (or want to do) to self-soothe that will point the way to the effective remedy.

The first 10-plus years of my practice were in Austin, Texas, where every season is allergy season; and you can actually see the allergens in the air a few days of

Allergies are exaggerated immune responses. This means they are at least somewhat stress-related. Capitalize on allergy season to remind yourself to use your favorite stress-busters.

Meditate, do yoga or tai chi, laugh, pray, have great sex. Or clean the house, catch up on filing, and do some crosswords, if that's your path to nirvana. Bring all your personal tips, tricks, and techniques to bear during this time to reduce overall stress in your life.

Also, don't add to your burden. Avoid extremes (of anything). Put off the idea of searching for a new house, job, or partner. Set the medical and dental appointments for another time on the calendar. Limit your travel and social engagements to those you find supportive. Cut unnecessary overtime, dress appropriate to the weather, etc.

Above all, take good care of yourself:

1. Eat nutritious food.
2. Sleep until refreshed.
3. Enjoy moderate exercise.
4. If you get sick, slow down, and change your routine.

Most seasonal allergies come from inhaled pollens or other plant parts.

the year. I got very comfortable with the main seasonal allergy remedies simply because there was no off-season. I never had the opportunity to forget what I had learned the season before!

Having moved my practice to North Carolina a couple of years ago, I have been surprised by how much the general symptom picture is the same as the one I saw in Texas.² And my short list of effective remedies has stayed the same. The seasons and the allergens changed with the geography, but the ways people suffer are the same.

Four great choices

According to the version of the repertory I use most often, homeopathy provides *at least* 131 terrific remedies for seasonal allergies. And I don't doubt that we need every single one. But if I were suddenly limited to only four remedies, I would want them to be *Allium cepa*, *Euphrasia*, *Sabadilla*, and *Histaminum*. Each covers the common symptoms identified above, and you can use the following clinical pearls to help keep them separate from each other in your thinking.

- ***Allium cepa***: The remedy made from the red onion. Most of us have heard quite a bit about this remedy, because it is a handy example to help explain the Law of Similars to homeopathic newcomers. Yes, people whose allergies will respond to this remedy may feel like they have been chopping onions. Said another way, the symptoms include: profuse, bland† tears; profuse burning† nasal discharge, which may be watery “like a faucet”; itchy, burning, tickling sensations, and sneezing. Also, the complaint will be better in open air† and worse in a warm room.

Often, these folks have a dry, red, peeling, or otherwise inflamed patch of skin between the nose and upper lip, from that burning nasal discharge. If no other remedy is clearly indicated, I typically start with either this remedy

or *Euphrasia* (below). Conveniently, these two remedies are the opposite of each other in the symptoms marked with the † symbol here and below.

- ***Euphrasia***: Excessive burning† tears; copious bland† nasal discharge; allergy worse in open air†; wheezing; loose cough with much mucus in upper airways; cough not usually deep or severe but worse during the day or only present during the day. Not surprisingly, these folks may have little inflamed triangles at the corners of their eyes from the burning tears. But the area between the nose and upper lip will be clear. In homeopathy, the absence of a remedy symptom in an individual case is hardly ever a strike against the match. But here, if there isn't *at least some* problematic tearing, another remedy will probably be a better choice.
- ***Sabadilla***: The primary complaint is sneezing. There is also: lots of itching/tickling that spreads; inclination to swallow; asthmatic breathing; coughing attacks. While most allergy clients are clearly suffering, this group is definitely under attack. There is a violence to the symptoms that most observers cannot miss. We see a sneezing/coughing fit. Our books say, paroxysmal, persistent, *violent*, or incomplete sneezing, *violent* coughing attacks which bring tears. Coupled with asthmatic breathing, we wonder how this person can catch a breath. The nose is dry, with tickling. The eyes are tearing, with red burning lids. One nostril is stuffed, but there is also fluent nasal discharge. The soft palate itches, as may the nose, skin, and/or anus.

But two giveaways to this remedy choice are the constant inclination to swallow, even when there is nothing to be swallowed (empty swallowing), and the complaint getting worse from the smell or thought of flowers. In my experience, few contemporary clients are inclined to say, or even know, that





What's on the Shelves?

In addition to homeopathic single remedies, other homeopathic products are often in the stores. You may find:

Local Honey – the non-remedy homeopathic solution. (Not quite.)* Start early and use increasing quantities of raw unprocessed local honey.

Homeopathic Combinations

These products may offend classical homeopathic sensibilities, but many people get effective relief from them. And often, we would lose those people to other types of medications, if combinations were not available. Look for trusted manufacturers and/or a somewhat-limited list of ingredients.

Symptomatic – These products combine our single remedies that do a good job of covering the common symptom picture(s) of seasonal allergies. Theoretically, there is no need to determine whether you need *Allium cepa* or *Euphrasia* if both remedies are in the product.

Isopathic – These products combine our single remedies that have been made from common allergens. No need to know whether ragweed or goldenrod is bothering you, if both remedies are included.

Geographic – These products can be symptomatic, isopathic, or a combination of the two. The main idea is that the most common suffering within a limited area of the map will be covered. Often, these products have geographic names like Midwest Mix or Southwest Zone.

With or Without Sarcodes – Any of these types of combinations may also include remedies made from body substances (sarcodes remedies) related to allergic reactions. *Histaminum* and *Adrenalinum* are examples.

*Local pollinators deposit minute particles of allergens in the honey. This at least hints at the principle of dilution, which is only one part of the remedy production process. Here, the resulting remedy would be isopathic.

Plenty of sufferers find relief by simply using the remedy made from the substance(s) to which they know they are allergic.

their allergy gets worse from the smell or thought of flowers; and we are not so cruel as to put a vase of flowers in the office during allergy season. But we can easily joke, “So, how are you feeling about flowers?” Many people who need this remedy will sneeze automatically. And some more will obviously worsen for a second or two.

- **Histaminum:** You may know that histamine is a substance in the body that can cause reactions in a wide variety of tissues. Or perhaps you are aware that antihistamines are common ingredients in conventional over-the-counter allergy and/or itch medicines. Either of these bits of information is a good clue to the way we can use *Histaminum*. In short, this remedy can cover any symptom of the skin or mucus membranes in allergies.

The symptoms include: dryness of the mucus membranes; feelings of constriction; redness, heat, itching, and burning; yellow secretions; red edges of the eyelids; nose blocked on one or both sides; sneezing; inflammation; generalized itching; painful dryness.

I admit I think of this remedy as something of a cheat. But if I only have one chance to help an individual—and especially if that person is too debilitated to discuss their own symptoms and state of being—then this remedy is a reasonable go-to. It will probably give some relief, and that relief may be enough to keep a mind open to homeopathy. It may even be enough relief for our prospect to provide more-individualizing information.

I restricted myself to four remedies in this first portion of the article. And if you learn these four remedies³, you will be able to help a lot of people during allergy season. You can keep those people from resorting to antihistamines, steroids, and other controversial conventional approaches, with their troubling side effects. Help them enough and you

may even win some true converts to homeopathy.

Five familiar remedies

To double the size of your allergy toolbox, I recommend getting re-acquainted with *Arsenicum album*, *Nux vomica*, *Apis mellifica*, *Rhus toxicodendron*, and *Urtica urens*. These remedies are already our good friends because of their effectiveness in a wide variety of illnesses, and aspects of each remedy picture may match a person's allergy presentation, too. You can easily find the symptoms in our literature, so I highlight but one thought for each remedy.

- **Arsenicum:** burning sensations relieved by heat.
- **Nux vomica:** frequent sneezing in the morning.
- **Apis:** puffy, fluid-filled, bag-like swellings (anywhere).
- **Rhus tox:** regular itching (like a mosquito bite).
- **Urtica urens:** painful itching (like a fire ant bite).

Eight unique options

Next up, we have the remedies that each cover a unique constellation of allergy symptoms. Many people needing these remedies will have some or all of the common symptoms mentioned previously (itching, stinging, burning, dripping, drying, sneezing, etc.). But they will also have some or all of the following symptoms:

- **Galphimia glauca:** Sneezing, bronchial asthma, hypersecretion from the nose and/or eyes, recurring herpes, edema (swollen from fluid accumulation) of the eyelids. These individuals are allergic types with hay fever, asthma, and/or sensitive skin, who are also oversensitive to weather changes.
- **Kali iodatum:** Thick yellow or green discharges, pain through the face and especially at the root of the nose, burning, and inflammation. Burning inside the nose is worse with each inhalation.

Before You Need to Know

Severe allergic reactions may be more common than we have been taught. And since **any** allergic reaction has this potential, everyone needs to know the following:

Anaphylaxis is the most serious type of allergic reaction. It is severe, systemic, and a **LIFE-THREATENING MEDICAL EMERGENCY**. The appropriate action is to call 911. Tell the 911 operator if you suspect you are seeing an allergic reaction and follow his or her directions to provide effective support before the trained professionals can arrive.

Some common signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis include swelling of the lips, tongue or throat, difficulty breathing, skin flushing, itching, redness or hives, anxiety, nausea, vomiting, dizziness or fainting. Learn more at:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/anaphylaxis>

<http://www.aafa.org/page/anaphylaxis-in-america.aspx>

The allergy is better in a warm room, but the person feels worse.

- **Arum triphyllum:** Profuse, excoriating, or acrid nasal discharge, mainly on the left side. Tingling and itching of the nose and lips. Overall redness and irritation of the face. The sufferer will pick the nose and lips until they bleed, bore the finger into the nose. (Adults often won't actually do these things, but they will *want* to. And some of them will admit it, if you ask.) There is painful soreness, along with raw and burning sensations of the nose, throat, and roof of the mouth. Corners of the mouth are sore and cracked.

- **Arundo:** Itching inside the ears, itching of the eyes and the roof of mouth. Finally, for those of you who really have tried everything, take a look at: *Juniperus virg* (the most allergic of the junipers), *Medusa* (made from the jellyfish), *Mezereum*, and *Wyethia*. Each is guaranteed to be a match for certain cases.

Find the correct remedy and then

Give it “by response.” This is another way of saying, “as needed,” two phrases almost guaranteed to confuse. So I usually tell people what I mean is,

1. Take a dose.
2. Feel the relief.
3. When the relief goes away (which you will recognize because the symptoms will return)
4. You can take another dose.
5. You can take another dose whether the relief lasted for 10 minutes⁴, 10 hours, 10 days, or 10 years.
6. When we repeat doses in this way, we match your system's natural pace for healing in the most efficient manner.
7. When we do this well (and the allergen counts don't vary too widely), the need to repeat doses will naturally spread further and further apart in time.

About potency

Up to and including 30c⁵, use what you have (or can get easily). In an ideal world, potency is individualized to the case in the same way as remedy selection, dose, and frequency. But seasonal allergies are

both intense and time-sensitive issues. If we have to wait to order a remedy, most people will have moved on before the remedy arrives. And if we can teach by-response dosing, then potency and frequency can work together optimally, reducing the risks of “overdoing.”

So what about Timmy?

When I asked him if he felt anything in his nose or mouth, he told me, “It hurts. Like hamburger.” And he added, “The inside of my whole face feels like hamburger. My throat, too.” (Perhaps an older person would have said, “Raw or painfully sore.”) And if I tell you that the corners of his mouth were cracked and I had the opportunity to watch him pick at the skin of his nose and lips, do you know what remedy I chose? Add the finger boring up the nose, and you will find a very close remedy match in the upper left corner of this page.

Timmy hasn't needed allergy remedies in quite some time, but *Arum triphyllum* was definitely a “That's why we love homeopathy!” response. Also, he is in high school now, a veritable billboard for homeopathy, reaching his full potential **EASILY**. (And still one of my favorites!)

- 1 Name and appearance changed to protect confidentiality.
- 2 Yes, there really are some special features to seasonal allergies in central Texas. Need I say more than, “cedar fever?” But many of you already know that one of these four remedies will do terrific service with that winter allergen. (The seasonal mold allergies are a fairly different picture—brain fog, fatigue, and more—and do better with other remedies.)
- 3 Start with the information provided here. But please, also go further. Read about the remedies in multiple texts, study some cases, get to know these remedies as you would good friends.
- 4 Allergy cases often require frequent repetition of a remedy. But it's not a good idea to repeat a remedy every ten minutes for more than four or five doses. Find a professional who can help you make a better choice.
- 5 If you are a practicing professional or otherwise extremely adept with using remedies in higher potencies, then you do not need my precaution to stick to the lower potencies. Certainly, there are allergy cases that need 200c or higher. But many allergy cases respond very well to low or even extremely low potencies. And in general, homeopathy is safer when we leave the high potencies to those who have gained their experience under supervision.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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