

CHART OF TRUTH

How to kick hayfever to the kerb — for good!

Most of us are looking forward to spring finally arriving – but for hayfever sufferers it's a time of streaming eyes, runny noses, wheezy chests and even itchy rashes. The UK has one of the highest hayfever rates in the world, with over 12 million sufferers – and the pollen season's getting longer! So try these simple life changes to beat hayfever this year...

Eat mackerel

An unhealthy diet will compromise your ability to deal with hayfever. So take Omega 3 (in supplements from Holland & Barrett or found naturally in the oil of fresh fish such as mackerel) and antioxidants (in supplements or in green leafy veg, mango and blueberries).

Get moving

Hayfever's more prevalent in people who are physically inactive. So get fit and lose the fever – simples. You'll also get more energy, more mental clarity and a fitter body. Aim to do 20 minutes of exercise that gets your heart rate going five days a week.

Drop the dairy

Dairy products increase the production of mucus in your respiratory tract, which exacerbates hayfever. Make like dairy-free doyennes Natalie Portman and Jessica Biel and try alternatives such as rice, almond, soya or coconut milk. Sparkling eyes and a lighter feeling are positive side-effects!

Have a cuppa

Studies have shown nettle tea can help relieve inflammation of the upper respiratory tract, as well as easing nasal congestion, sneezing and itching. Liquorice tea has a soothing effect because it helps to reduce irritation of the respiratory system.

Prick it

Acupuncture's thought to be a good method of beating hayfever because it restores equilibrium in your body when there's an imbalance. Di Shimmel from the British Acupuncture Council says:

'Traditional acupuncture's very beneficial for managing hayfever.'

To find a practitioner in your area, visit acupuncture.org.uk.

Get spray fever!

Hayfever can be treated – and sometimes prevented – with a drug-free nasal spray. Care Allergy Defence (£5.99 for 500mg – 200 sprays – available from Sainsbury's, Boots and Morrison's) reacts with moisture in the nose to create an invisible gel barrier and prevent pollen entering the nasal tract. This stops the body's defence system from releasing histamine, so a runny nose can be avoided.

