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FOOD A PREVENTIVE OPTION FOR ALLERGY



Allergy is an overreaction of the immune system. Generally, the immune system protects own body from pathogens like viruses and bacteria from causing harm to the body. Allergen causes the immune system to activate, the body then will develop antibodies to an allergen after exposure. When a person is again exposed to the same allergen, an allergic reaction occurs. Common allergens include: dust, pollen, foods, such as nuts, medications and many others.

There are some medications for relieving allergy symptoms. Allergy can be controlled only by identification of the particular allergen that is causing the reaction and preventing the exposure to it. All the medications given are to control the symptoms of allergy rather than completely cure it.

Hence here a healthy eating has an equally important role in addition to medications which would help in reducing inflammation that is caused by allergens. Preventing allergy would require avoiding certain foods, and having a balanced, nutritious diet. There are certain foods in nature that can help fight the allergies and prevent the underlying inflammation, dilating the air ways since during allergy there will be shortness of breath, and providing relief from other effects of inflammation. Many anti-inflammatory foods are present in the nature of which few them of would be explained in this article and how they are important in controlling the allergy and its symptoms.

Probiotics is a very popular word now days have been proven to provide both anti-inflammatory and anti-allergic effects. These are supposed to be the good bacteria of the gut which would help the body rather than causing any pathological conditions. Now a day's probiotics are used for a wide variety of conditions of which the anti inflammatory and anti allergic effects are making them to be used for wide variety of allergic conditions.

Fruits that are rich in **Vitamin C** would be of very great value in allergic conditions. Once the body is repeatedly exposed to an allergen it would release Histamine, the main culprit in the body which causes itching, hives and other discomforts during allergy. Vitamin C inhibits the inflammatory cells known as mast cells from releasing histamine and also provides relief from allergy by reducing inflammation □ which is supposed to be the key to allergies. □ Vitamin C being an antioxidant vitamin counteracts the inflammatory effects during the allergy and is seen in foods such as oranges, strawberries, apples, and watermelon. Fresh Fruits and Vegetables have the natural anti-inflammatory effects and can help relieve allergies. Apples are one of the best dietary sources of **quercetin** □ a bioflavonoid that has been shown to effectively protect against allergic reactions. Sweet potatoes, supposed to be one of the oldest vegetables known to man, which are highly nutritious, are one of the foods that least likely to cause allergic reactions hence considered to be safe as first food for babies. Sweet potatoes contain vitamin C. Onions, peppers, berries, and parsley all has quercetin. Kiwi is a fruit rich in vitamin C. It can also help in lowering the levels of histamines. Pineapple has an enzyme called **bromelain**, which helps in reducing irritation in allergic diseases such as asthma.

Good Fat refers to the key of fatty acids called the polyunsaturated fatty acids (**PUFAs**), namely omega-3 fatty acids and omega-6 fatty acids. Our body needs both of them for vital functions. Food sources of omega-3 fatty acids include cold-water fish such as salmon, tuna, flaxseeds, chia seeds, and walnuts. PUFAs help in allergy by easing the inflammation of airways.

Bio flavonoids important and most neglected antioxidants obtained naturally can provide relief from allergy by acting on mast-cells which release histamine and thus decreasing the number of mast cells reacting to an allergen. Quercetin, an important bioflavonoid seen in apples, onions, tea, and red wine has very well anti inflammatory effects.

Foods that are rich in Magnesium causes dilation of the airways and would also decrease histamine release. Magnesium rich foods include almonds, cashews, help in relieving the choking or breathlessness feeling.

Foods Rich in Vitamin E, the gamma-tocopherol form of vitamin E has proven effects to decrease allergy-related inflammation.

Rosehips the fruit of rose plant, abundantly loaded with the healing and the anti allergic properties are one of the best sources of proanthocyanides and phytochemicals that inhibit the enzymes that help in histamine

release and would help in some relief from allergic symptoms.

Flax seeds scientifically called the *Linum usitatissimum* which refers to the most useful. Flax seeds play a very important role in many pathological conditions and help in preventing many common diseases including constipation, heart problems, joint aches etc. Similarly they are thought to play an important role in allergic reactions since they contain the rare selenium and a single cup of these would provide more than 60% of the recommended daily dose of selenium. They not only contain selenium but also have omega 3 fatty acids and are supposed to be the best plant sources of omega 3.

Green tea now a days most commonly used for weight loss regimens cannot be limited to it but has also an immense use as anti allergic due to its anti oxidant properties.

Mushrooms the most neglected foods among the vegetarians have very high selenium content and antioxidant properties which play a very important role in developing the immunity.

Garlic most commonly used in the daily diet has an immense use in heart, controlling the blood pressure and certain types of stomach cancers. Eating garlic daily would help to inhibit the

activity of certain inflammatory enzymes which generate the inflammatory mediators like prostaglandins and thromboxane and increase inflammation. It is also proved to have a good amount of selenium and Vitamin C which serve as anti allergens.

Foods like turmeric, mushrooms, dandelion greens and sunflower seeds may be particularly good for allergy. Turmeric used in Ayurveda and Chinese medicine for centuries has been shown to **possess anti-inflammatory properties**, which is why this powerful root plant of the ginger family may also help prevent allergic reactions.

Hence there are wide variety of nutritious foods that are in nature that would help us to over the recurrence and the symptoms of allergy. The only thing we need to do is to get a profound knowledge about these food products and have a healthy and balanced diet which help in preventing the allergies to reoccur as the saying always goes **PREVENTION IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN CURE.** ★

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