

# tasteforlife®



## newsbites

### Ah-choo!



Whether you're gardening or golfing, summer can mean hay fever, or allergic rhinitis. An inflammation of the mucous membranes of the nasal passages caused by environmental allergens including animal dander, dust, grass, molds, and pollen, respiratory allergies can spoil summer fun with a number of annoying symptoms:

- itching and irritated eyes, nose, and throat
- fatigue
- headache
- sneezing
- tearing and weeping eyes

Approximately 20 percent of Americans suffer from allergic rhinitis—and the prevalence among adults is rising. Conventional medicine treats allergies with antihistamines, like fexofenadine (Allegra), and corticosteroid sprays. But these drugs carry unwanted side effects, and some hay fever patients still exhibit symptoms even with pharmaceuticals.

Instead, try some natural hay fever relief. Stinging nettle root often offers quick relief for a runny nose, and grapeseed and pine bark extracts are also useful. Ginger reduces inflammation from allergic reactions. Quercetin tablets, taken between meals, can help prevent seasonal allergies.

A new randomized, placebo-controlled study finds butterbur extract, when taken three times daily, to be as effective as fexofenadine, which causes drowsiness in some people. "Butterbur extract Ze 339 is an effective alternative to fexofenadine in the treatment of intermittent allergic rhinitis," the American Botanical Council's John Neustadt, ND, concludes.

SELECTED SOURCES "For Adults, Allergies Bring a Surprising Twist" by Laurie Tarkan, *New York Times*, 4/18/06 ■ *Prescription for Herbal Healing* by Phyllis A. Balch, CNC (\$23.95, Penguin Group/Avery, 2002) ■ "Study Finds Butterbur Extract Effective in Treatment of Allergic Rhinitis" by John Neustadt, ND, *HerbClip*, 3/31/06

### Did You Know?

Hartford CT, Greenville SC, and Boston MA are the three most allergenic cities in the U.S., finds the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America.



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### travel tips



**OVER THE SUMMER**, many of us will be hopping a plane. To protect your health and reduce stress while flying, try these tips:

- Take vitamin C and zinc before and after boarding the plane to help compensate for pressure changes, lower levels of oxygen, and dry air in flight.
- Bring along single-serve beverages and water bottles, fruit, energy bars, nuts, and other healthy snacks.
- Try to get up and walk around every 30 minutes or so; jump up and down in the lavatory to compensate for sitting so long.

In addition to cramped conditions on board aircraft, low air pressure and oxygen levels can contribute to deep vein thrombosis (DVT), aka "economy class syndrome," in some people. Drinking too much alcohol and taking sedatives during flights only increase the risk for DVT. But a recent clinical study suggests that French maritime pine bark supplements, taken two to three hours prior to flying, may effectively protect against this syndrome.

SELECTED SOURCES **1,001 Health Secrets** by Betty Kamen, PhD (\$23.95, Nutrition Encounter, 2003) ■ "Immobility Not Only Factor in DVT Air Risk: Study" by Patricia Reaney, Reuters, 3/10/06

