

Quénet's family pharmacy

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Control Your Allergies

There is no cure for allergies. The best way to control or treat any allergy is to avoid the triggering substance. However, this may be difficult. The most common treatments are:

- » Antihistamine - blocking the release of histamine by the body's mast cells in body tissue (histamine causes the allergic reaction)
- » Decongestants - shrinking swollen nasal tissues, thereby relieving congestion. These drugs are sometimes combined with an antihistamine and control nasal symptoms effectively
- » Topical creams or skin ointments for eczema
- » Immunotherapy or allergy injections - can gradually build tolerance to the allergenic substance so that the body no longer reacts to it
- » Antibiotics - may also be necessary to treat complications such as the ear and sinus infections that are common in children with allergies
- » Steroids - controlling inflammation and stopping allergic reactions. At the same time, these anti-inflammatory substances reduce nasal swelling and mucous secretions

There is a wide range of medicines for treating asthma. Usually more than one type of medication is prescribed, firstly to relieve the symptoms during an acute attack and secondly to control the symptoms over time.

Home

If you have had a severe allergic reaction in the past, you should always carry a kit to treat anaphylactic shock and give yourself an injection from the kit when necessary. It is important to get medical treatment immediately, but while waiting for medical help to arrive, lie down with your legs raised above chest level to increase the blood flow to your heart and brain.

Surgery

People with asthma are likely to suffer from complications during and after surgery. Make sure your doctor knows that you have asthma, as you will probably need to have a number of tests done before undergoing surgery.

You should also inform your doctor if you suffer from allergic rhinitis and it is not possible to schedule the operation outside the "hay fever" season.

Other

No nutritional or herbal treatments or vitamin or mineral supplements have been proven to be successful in treating allergies. If you are allergic to pollen, you should be especially careful of herbal remedies, as they may contain the very substances that activate your allergic symptoms!

Unless you are allergic to some food substance, you do not have to change your diet to prevent an allergic reaction. As an allergy is not caused by a nutritional deficiency but is a reaction of the immune system, taking vitamin and mineral supplements will not help to prevent an allergic reaction.

Prevention

Depending on your specific allergies, some preventive maintenance at home could help control the environment, thereby reducing the risk of allergic reactions. These steps include:

- » Using special mattress and pillow covers to control dust mites
- » Frequent vacuuming and dusting to get rid of dust mites and other airborne allergens
- » Using an air conditioner in your home and car and changing the filters often
- » Getting rid of old bedding, toys, clothing and other items that may be carriers of dust and mould
- » Keeping pets outdoors as much as possible and off the furniture
- » Bathing pets regularly to reduce dander
- » Mopping uncarpeted surfaces regularly
- » Removing overstuffed furniture and carpets to reduce dust mites