



## 4 Drug-Free Ways to Fight Seasonal Allergies

By Dana Hudepohl  
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With a [2022 study](#) out of the University of Michigan showing that climate change is making allergy season start earlier and last longer, it's more important than ever to find ways to keep pollen from making you miserable. Eating [whole-food, plant-based](#) is a step in the right direction, since eliminating dairy can help relieve nasal congestion. Here are other expert-recommended tips for combatting seasonal allergies without medication.

### 1. Close Windows and Doors

It may be tempting to let in fresh air, but the ripple effects from pesky pollen, which can settle into furniture, carpet, and bedding, overshadow any joy from springtime breezes. “The principal strategy of treating allergies is always avoidance, trying to limit what’s triggering the symptoms,” says Michael C. Hollie, MD, an allergy and asthma specialist in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and a board member of the T. Colin Campbell Center for Nutrition Studies. “If we can do that, then you don’t have to [turn to] medications.”

### 2. Clear Your Tracks

For pollen that sneaks in anyway, try an air purifier with a HEPA filter, which can remove 99.97% of airborne particles. In a study in [Allergy & Asthma Proceedings](#) researchers found that by using an air-filtration device in the bedroom, 77% of patients with ragweed allergies measured significant improvements in nasal symptoms, quality of life, and daytime sleepiness. Be sure to

periodically change out the HEPA filter according to manufacturer guidelines.

### 3. Take Plenty of Showers

Any pollen lingering on your hair or clothes can spark symptoms. A quick fix is changing your clothes after spending time outdoors. But nonnegotiable is a nightly shower, with a thorough hair-washing, before climbing under the covers. “You don’t want to carry that pollen to bed with you and for it to get into your bedding,” says Hollie.

### 4. Rinse with a Nasal Wash

Saline washes flush pollen, mucus, and inflammatory mediators out of the nasal passages. “The majority of my patients get a lot of relief,” says Hollie. In fact, a meta-analysis of 10 studies in the [American Journal of Rhinology & Allergy](#) found a nearly 30% improvement in nasal symptoms and quality of life, and a 62% reduction in medicine use with regular nasal washing. For convenience try a premade solution (like [NeilMed Sinus Rinse Kit](#) or [Arm & Hammer Simply Saline Allergy and Sinus](#)), or make your own (see below).

#### Make Your Own Nasal Wash for Seasonal Allergies

Here’s how to make your own nasal/sinus wash at home to combat seasonal allergies, courtesy of the [American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology](#).

#### Ingredients

- 3 tsp. iodide-free salt (with no anti-caking agents or preservatives)
- 1 tsp. baking soda

#### Instructions

1. Mix together salt and baking soda. Store in an airtight container.
2. When ready to use it, dissolve 1 teaspoon of the mixture in 1 cup lukewarm boiled or distilled

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water. Administer using a clean nasal bulb, syringe, squeeze bottle, or neti pot.

3. Repeat daily as needed up to three times a day.

*To learn more about a whole-food, plant-based diet, visit our [Plant-Based Primer](#). For meal-planning support, check out [Forks Meal Planner](#), FOK's easy weekly meal-planning tool to keep you on a healthy plant-based path.*