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Itching and Dripping:

Help Make Your Allergies Go Away!

By: Roxanne B. Sukol, M.D., M.S.

Maybe cold season, when all the windows are closed up tight, is the worst time for your allergies. Or summer, when the smell of fresh-mown grass makes you miserable. Or maybe it's spring and fall, the change of the seasons, when just the thought of pollen makes you itch all over. No matter what time of year you struggle with allergies, there are a number of important things you can do to feel better and get your allergies under control.

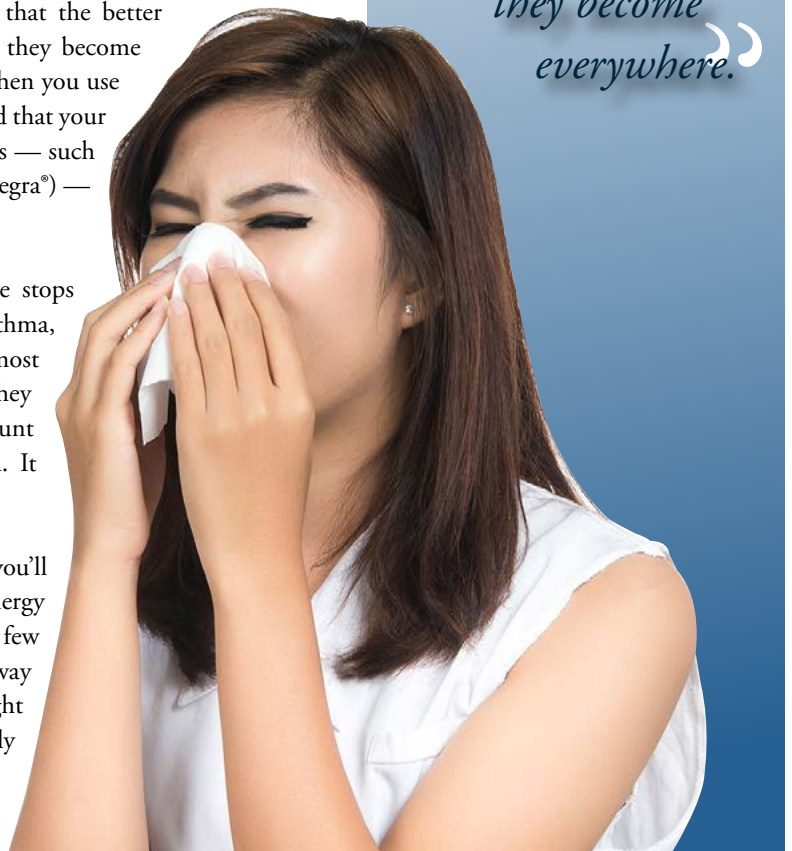
Did you know that there are different names for allergies, depending on where they show up in your body? Think of allergies as one character with a number of different outfits. Here's what I mean: If you have allergies in your lungs, it's called asthma. Allergies in your skin? Eczema. In your eyes? Allergic conjunctivitis. And in your nose? Allergic rhinitis.

Why is it useful to know this? Because doctors have found that the better you control your allergies in one place, the better controlled they become everywhere. So if you've noticed that your asthma gets better when you use your neti pot regularly, that's probably why. And if you've noticed that your eczema seems to get worse when you run out of antihistamines — such as loratadine (Claritin®), cetirizine (Zyrtec®) or fexofenadine (Allegra®) — well, it's not your imagination.

Don't be surprised if your eyes stop itching when your nose stops dripping! People with allergy symptoms in multiple locations (asthma, allergic conjunctivitis or eczema) often find that they get the most benefit if they treat all their allergy symptoms simultaneously. They also often find that, over time, they are able to decrease the amount of medicine they need to keep their allergies well controlled. It usually takes more work to get healthy than to stay healthy.

Being in good control today improves the chances that you'll be in good control tomorrow. And vice versa: Once those allergy symptoms get some momentum, it can be rough going for a few days until you get things back under control. What's the best way to stay healthy? Avoid triggers, cover all your bases with the right combination of medicines, and make sure you keep a ready supply on hand. Prevention is always the best strategy.

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Moves to Relieve Lower Back Pain

By: Ryan Sidak, B.S. Exercise Science

If you experience lower back pain, you're not alone! About 80 percent of American adults suffer from some type of pain in the back. From tight muscles to spinal degeneration that happens as we age, most of us will experience some type of back pain. Whether you spend your work day sitting in an office chair, you're constantly on your feet, or you're lifting heavy objects, stretching and strengthening the muscles that attach to the posterior region of the pelvic bone and spine are key to eliminating low back issues.

Keep in mind, while these moves can be helpful in alleviating or lessening your pain, you should always discuss any back pain with your doctor.

Here, six moves to stretch and strengthen the muscles that can cause low back pain.

1. Piriformis Stretch

Lie on your back and cross your right foot across the top of the left knee. Lift the left, bottom knee toward your chest by gently grabbing the back of your thigh to pull the stretch deeper. Repeat on the other side.

2. Psoas Major Stretch

This stretch is great for people who sit down all day. Begin with your right knee on the mat and your left foot flat on the ground. Lean your weight into your left, flat foot until you feel the hip flexor of the opposite leg stretch. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds and repeat on the opposite side.

3. Hamstring Stretch

If you're on your feet all day, this stretch is for you! Begin by lying on your back with both legs fully extended. Raise your right leg up until you feel the stretch along the back of your raised leg. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds and repeat on the opposite side. If you need assistance raising your leg, feel free to use a yoga strap or stretch band placed behind the calf of your raised leg and gently pull your leg up until you feel the stretch.

4. Lower Back Stretch

Kneel down and reach your hands as far forward as you can while simultaneously pushing your hips back and down into your heels. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds.

5. Lower Back Mobilization

This is a great strengthening exercise for the underdeveloped muscles of the lumbar (lower spine). Begin on all fours like a crawling baby. Simultaneously raise the left arm and the right leg. Hold at the top of this movement for 3 to 5 seconds before returning to the starting position. Repeat with right arm and left leg. Perform 10 times on each side.

6. Spine Stretch

Lie on your back with your knees bent at a 90-degree angle, feet flat on the ground. Lower both knees to the right side and turn your head to the left. Hold for 30 seconds and repeat on the opposite side.



Run for Your Life!

Jogging can add years and put a spring in your step. Here's the best part: **Less is more.**

The health benefits of jogging are legendary, from improving cardiovascular fitness to boosting mood. But there's more to starting or maintaining a running routine than "just do it." In fact, less may be more when it comes to the amount of time per week you spend jogging. In a recent long-term study, light joggers — those who ran slowly from 1 to 2.5 hours a week — outlived both people who didn't exercise at all (no surprise there) and those running strenuously for long hours. To begin a light jogging program, pace yourself and listen to your body. Couch-to-5K or other interval-based programs are a great way to start. Having the right gear really matters too, so make your first stop a running specialty store and have them fit you with shoes

that are right for you. Before you hit the road, talk with your doc if you have bone or joint issues, heart problems or respiratory issues like asthma, or if you're over 65.

Keep in mind that light jogging isn't the only route to a long, healthy life. Swimming, biking and power walking will also get your heart pumping healthier while having less impact on your joints.

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors



Healthy Recipe: Frittata with Baby Greens and Feta

Developed by Sara Quessenberry for Cleveland Clinic Wellness

Here's a dish that's so versatile you can make it for almost any meal — breakfast, lunch or dinner! The egg whites keep it light and the feta adds a creamy texture. Baby greens add color and an extra dose of fresh, delicious flavor.

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 yellow onion, sliced
- 8 cups (5 ounces) baby greens, such as spinach, Swiss chard, arugula or a mixture
- 4 large eggs
- 4 large egg whites
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 ounce feta cheese, crumbled (about 2 tablespoons)

Nutrition Info Per Serving:

(1 piece, approximately 7.5 ounces) 170 calories, 10 g total fat, 3 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 4 g protein, 8 g total carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 2 g sugar, 190 mg cholesterol, 360 mg sodium

Instructions:

Heat the oven (with the oven rack in middle) to 350°F.

Place a medium-sized cast iron or regular skillet over medium-high heat. Add the oil and heat until it shimmers. Add the sliced onion and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Then lower the heat to medium and cook, stirring often, until golden brown and tender, 5 to 7 minutes more.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs, egg whites, salt and pepper.

Once the onion is tender, add the greens. Cover with a lid and let cook, untouched, for 1 minute. Then remove the lid and, using tongs, toss together and cook approximately 1 minute more until the greens are just barely wilted. Remove from heat.

Pour the beaten eggs over the wilted greens, making sure they are evenly distributed. Crumble the feta over the top. Transfer to the oven and bake until the center of the frittata is set, about 15 minutes.

Servings: 4