

Ask The Professionals

If you have any questions these professionals can answer, please write to:
"Ask The Professionals"
 c/o The Canadian Champion
 191 Main Street E.
 Milton, Ontario L9T 4N9
 or Fax to: 878-4943

Erika Ristok B.A., N.D.
 Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine

- Clinical Nutrition ▪ Herbal Medicine
- Homeopathy ▪ Acupuncture

95 Main Street East, 2nd Floor, Milton
 (905) 693-9837



Erika Ristok B.A., N.D.

Q: I am experiencing spring allergy symptoms. What can I do?

A: Classic symptoms of seasonal allergies include itchy eyes, runny nose, sneezing, and post-nasal drip. Other allergic conditions commonly treated by naturopathic doctors include dermatitis/eczema, asthma and hives. What these problems have in common is that they are all attempts by the body to protect itself from substances that are intrinsically harmless.

The conventional allopathic treatments for allergies are decongestants, antihistamines, or allergy shots. These usually alleviate symptoms, however their effects are temporary and may include unwanted side effects, such as drowsiness in the case of antihistamines.

Many people are able to manage their symptoms effectively using natural substances that reduce histamine. These include vitamin C and quercetin (taken in capsule form), and the herb "nettle" (used in a tea, tincture, or capsule.)

The naturopathic approach goes further, by looking not just at a person's symptoms, but at his or her whole picture. This includes questioning regarding diet and lifestyle factors, and uncovering individual susceptibilities based on personal and family health histories.

Strengthening adrenal function is often one of the keys to successfully overcoming allergy symptoms. The adrenals are small glands that sit on top of the kidneys. They put out many hormones including cortisol, which reduces inflammation and the allergic response. Adrenal function can be weakened by prolonged stress and overuse of caffeine-containing products. Symptoms of adrenal fatigue can include low energy, anxiety, hypoglycemia, chronic low blood pressure, and reduced resistance to allergies and infection.

If low adrenal function is a cause of your allergies, B vitamins, vitamin C, and herbs such as siberian ginseng and licorice root can be helpful. Note that licorice root is contraindicated in individuals with high blood pressure.

An assessment by your naturopathic doctor will allow him or her determine the appropriate treatment plan for you.

Erika Ristok, N.D. uses naturopathic therapies including clinical nutrition, herbal medicine, homeopathy and acupuncture in her local family practice.



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As summer approaches and we are now outside, it's that time to decide whether to paint the exterior.

What to take into account...

Your surroundings. As in neighbouring homes. You don't want to jump out from the others too much, of course. If you are in the countryside you may have more versatility in colour, but do take your style of home into account. Also most important is the tone in your brick or siding. If, for instance, you have an orange hue obviously a pink door would look off. However blues, rusts and greens could look sharp as accents.

Now you can paint your siding too using an exterior latex eggshell. Accolade by Pratt and Lambert has a really nice finish, any colour possible with no priming in most situations and extremely durable. Choose a neutral again to balance with any brick, roof and even your cement.

Too many colours will ruin all your hard work. Saying, that, if you do use colours take tones of a base colour as in a soft grey taupe for your siding. Now trim! White is still good for windows, etc. If not take a deeper tone of your base colour and accentuate windowsills, shutters and framing. If pillars are a factor trim the base or any decorative work darker to show it off.

The garage door generally blends in with the house but this is a personal choice. Now your front door, the opening to your nest. This tells everyone who you are. Gloss latex is again the choice to make and choose a rich colour. Remember latex paint expands and contracts with the weather. It is not as brittle as oil, doesn't yellow over time and is easier to work with.

Make sure it's not too hot when applying paint as it can dry too quickly while applying.

You could try a little Floetrol in your can to extend your work time.

Well good luck and any colour help you need give us a call or drop in.

P.S. Drive around and see what some homes look like. There are some really good ideas you can get from looking around!



Dr. Angela Barrow
 B.Sc., D.C.

BARROW FAMILY CHIROPRACTIC

180 Ontario St. S. Milton
 (905) 878-4994

Fax: (905) 875-4485

Email: angebarrowdc@hotmail.com

How Chiropractic Can Help You Cope With Seasonal Allergies

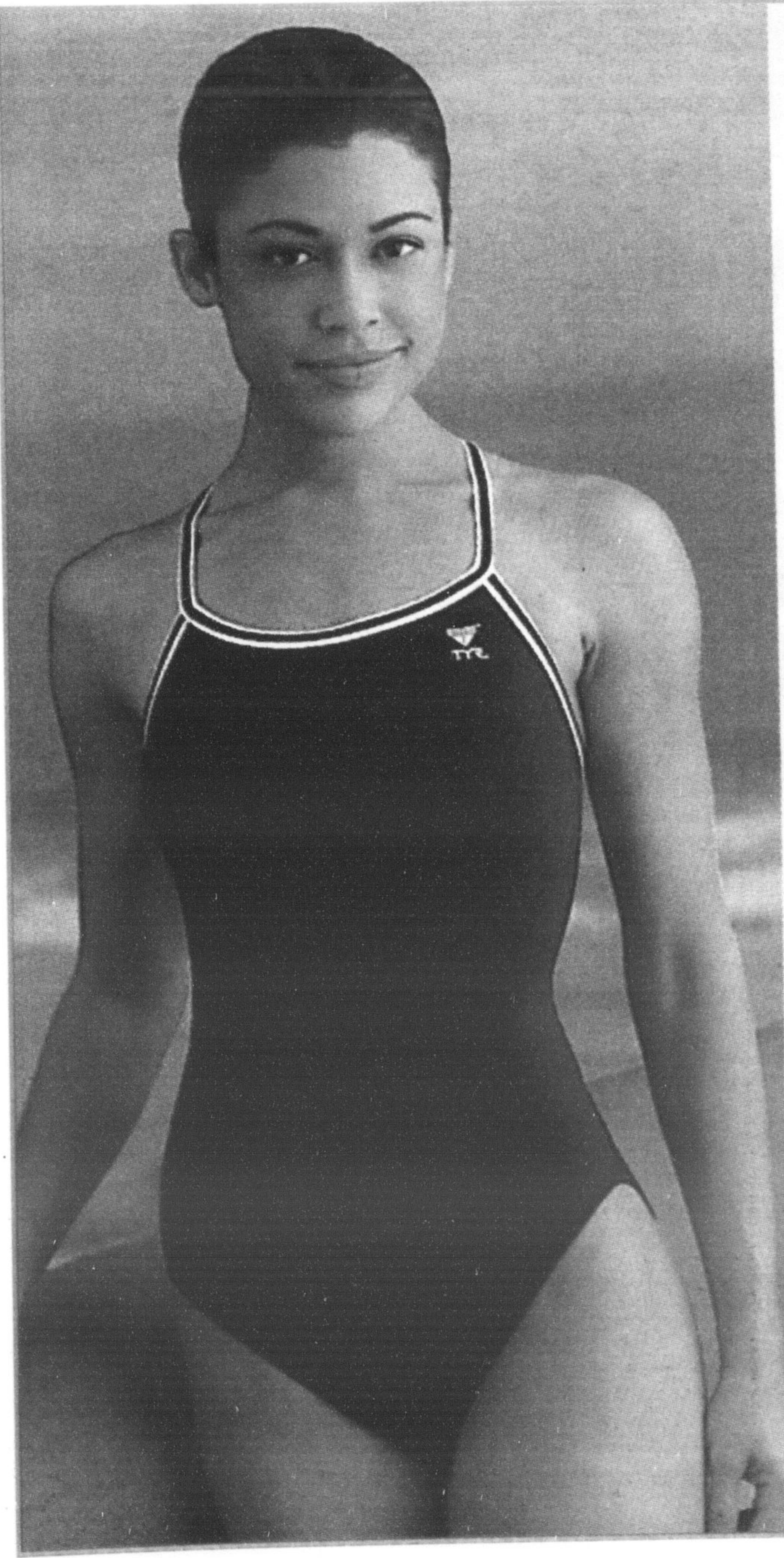
For some people, the start of spring is also the start of allergy season. Commonly known as hayfever, seasonal allergic rhinitis is a term used to describe the stuffy, sneezy, itchy symptoms that affect 15-20% of Canadian children and many adults each year. Windborne pollens are the big offenders for most hay fever sufferers. Symptoms can develop from tree pollen in early spring, grass pollen in spring and early summer, and ragweed and other weed pollens from late summer to mid October. Moulds can also cause a reaction.

An allergy occurs when the body's natural defense system reacts to a substance, such as pollen, that it thinks may be harmful. The immune system overreacts to the allergen and produces too many neutralizing chemicals (usually histamines) to counteract it.

Although no one really knows why some people have allergies, there is agreement that it runs in families and that it is a sensitization of the immune system. There are, however, people with allergies who do not have a family history of them. A naturopathic doctor states that, "depending on how strong you are, your body can take stresses such as chemical, physical, emotional and environmental, but at some point, one more stress will tip you over to have symptoms."

Orthodox medicine has no cure for allergies, only treatment. Since runny eyes irritation, redness, fullness in the sinuses and other allergy symptoms are caused by histamines, antihistamines are often prescribed to dry mucus membranes. A different approach would be to improve your body's own natural functioning so it can effectively cope with the environment.

Chiropractors do not treat allergies, asthma or even back problems, they treat the nervous system. As long as the nervous system is able to control all functions of the body with no interference, you should have the best health possible. If however, there is interference to the normal function of the nervous system, your body will not function properly and will react poorly to pollens and other environmental allergens. Chiropractors call this interference a vertebral subluxation. It is a serious health hazard! By correcting these vertebral subluxations with regular chiropractic care, you will have a better chance to successfully deal with allergies and the rest of life's stressors.



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