

The Root of Your Seasonal Allergies

The Allergy Story

Doug experienced seasonal allergies for as long as he could remember. In reality he had always had some form of post nasal drip, but come fall in Austin he was miserable. He woke with his head in a fog, the sinus pressure at times felt unbearable, body aches prevailed and naturally it affected his mood, making him both irritable and a bit hopeless. Of course he had tried everything—or at least what most allergy sufferers in Austin have tried—acupuncture, a neti pod, herbs, and even rounds of antibiotics for reoccurring sinus infections. He finally resorted to taking his daily dose of Zyrtec, which still only minimized his symptoms.



It is important to note here that addressing chronic allergy symptoms in individuals at the peak of the season is challenging, and like all protocols, the success is very dependent on the compliance.

As I listened to Doug's story and took his case history these things stood out:

- He had suffered from frequent ENT infections as a child.
- He experienced digestive difficulties that ranged from sluggish bowels to bloating and loose stools since his early twenties.
- He often woke feeling exhausted and with aches in his joints.
- While he had eliminated gluten from his diet, he still consumed dairy products.

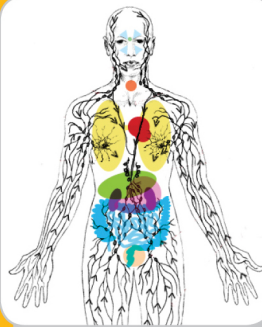
These are the steps I believed we needed to take:

1. Fix the output by supporting and cleaning out the digestive organs, including the liver.
2. Improve the input by eliminating further inflammatory foods.
3. Restore healthy gut bacteria.
4. Give relief to his ears, nose, and eyes struggling with the secondary symptoms.

Here's why:

The root of Doug's problem was actually a bit of a distance from his sinuses. It originated in his digestive tract. I know that because when the bowels are not able to eliminate and clean the body at least twice a day with normal formed stools, the acid must go somewhere. Most often that is up in search of the next emergency exit—the sinus cavity.

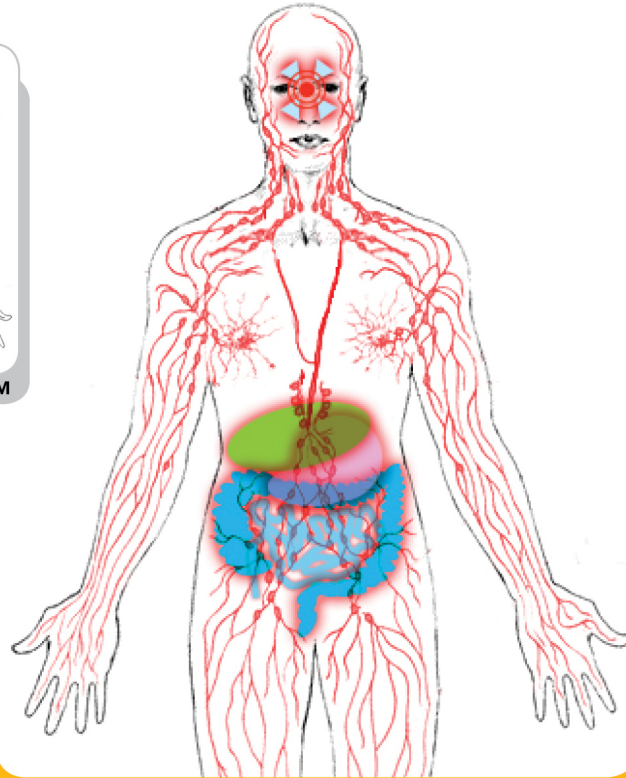
THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM: ALLERGIES



A HEALTHY SYSTEM

The origin of your allergies is not in your head, but originates in your digestive tract. When the bowels are not able to eliminate and clean the body at least twice a day with normal formed stools, the acid must go somewhere. Most often that is up in search of the next emergency exit—the sinus cavity. Note here that 40% of your lymph

nodes are actually in the abdominal area and all the lymph fluid from the body's clean-up process empties right here. If the elimination organs are compromised in any way, this creates quite a traffic jam of acidic waste. Your body is well designed and it compensates by employing emergency exits when the primary ones are slacking on the job. This scenario repeated day after day, year after year can create quite the chronic condition. Allergy season exacerbates a situation that is really going on all year long.



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Take a look here at our graphic and note that 40% of the lymph nodes are actually in this abdominal area and all the lymph fluid from the body's clean-up process empties right here. If the elimination organs are compromised in any way, this creates quite a traffic jam of acidic waste. Your body is well designed and it compensates by employing emergency exits when the primary ones are slacking on the job. This scenario repeated day after day, year after year can create quite the chronic condition. Allergy season exacerbates a situation that is really going on all year long.

In Doug's case, because we were in the midst of allergy season, I decided to address both the root and the secondary symptoms at the same time with these steps:

- Improve the output with a gemmotherapy protocol

supporting bowels and liver.

- Remove dairy products from the diet.
- Take a 14 day course of intensive probiotics followed by a daily dose throughout this season to re-establish good bacteria in the gut.
- Offer an acute gemmotherapy formula for the sinus symptoms as needed.

Within the month Doug was symptom free—not only with his sinus symptoms but the body aches and foggy head as well. His improvement was so dramatic I actually did not see him for some time. When I did finally, he told me he continued to keep dairy and gluten out of his diet and hasn't had an allergy symptom the past two seasons.

Though I might like to pat myself on the back for helping Doug, he really did the heavy lifting by being open to making the dietary changes needed. Not all of my clients have such immediate and lasting results. I've learned over time while following similar cases that homeopathy and gemmotherapy protocols open up the body to clean, but filling it back up with inflammatory foods leads to an endless battle of symptoms. If you are still struggling with yourself about dairy and its place in your diet, you'll want to watch for my post about that next week.

Midweek Pause—Fear

“If we get deeply in touch with the present, we can touch the past as well and transform it.”

—Thich Nhat Hahn, *You Are Here*

Consider: Cleaning up past wounds and fears doesn't have to

involve an excavation team. When we can be fully present to our fears, lovingly accepting and acknowledging their presence, the healing begins. It continues with each mindful breath.

Realize that every fear we feel today has its roots in our past. By being conscious and mindful to each fear when they rise up within we can begin to heal our past.

Who might you become without your fear?

Prepare: Thich Nhat Hanh teaches us to sit with our wounds and fears as they arise at any given moment. Saying, "I am here for you" to the fear that arises, just as you would say to a friend or loved one that needed your support.

As it fully surfaces, say out loud to that fear, "I am here for you, I will be here for you all day." Acknowledge that you are no longer this person from your past. You have transformed and continue to transform moment to moment with each breath in the present moment.

The minute that fear arises there is a part of us that wants to jump and run. Stay with it. Touch it gently with each breath. Stay a few more breath cycles than you feel comfortable. That urge to dash may just dissipate... or maybe not. Try this again tomorrow and the next day...just keep coming back.

Do: When you feel an old fear or painful emotion arise today or later this week, make a date with it as you would an old friend and hear it out. Sit in silence and say, "I am here for you."

Midweek Pause–Truth

“The truth you believe and cling to makes you unavailable to hear anything new”–Pema Chodron

Consider: You are who you believe you are. By speaking about yourself and to yourself in truths you practice loving kindness. When we are loving and kind to ourselves we can be loving and kind to those whose lives we touch. One simple act of truth telling can touch the lives of countless others.

Prepare: What do you say about yourself that you would not tolerate from others? Repeating and reliving old or untruths restrict our beliefs. These limit who we are and what we can accomplish. The truth is... you already know some of your inner dialogue isn't true. It is just a story that restricts you from being the full person you can actually be.

- Close your eyes, take three cleansing breaths and ask yourself,
- “What do I cling to about myself that is not true?”
- “What real truth can I replace that with?”
- Now repeat it silently to yourself over and over again with your hands on your heart.
- Say it out loud, inhale with each word, releasing your breath between words.
- Finally write it down and place it somewhere it can serve as a reminder.

Do: Acknowledge and release an untruth you cling to about yourself today by rewriting a truth.

Lauren's Kitchen: Hearty Fall Curry

Nothing combines all the flavors of Fall quite as well as this hearty curry from Plant Powered Kitchen that brings together pumpkin, chickpeas, and cauliflower. Don't forget to make enough for leftovers... Something I did not take into consideration. Looks like I'll just have to give it another go!

Lymphatic System 102

The human body needs two systems to operate optimally to support healthy cell reproduction. Those two systems are the cardiovascular and the lymphatic systems. Unfortunately, in today's practice of allopathic medicine, the emphasis is solely on the cardiovascular. By ignoring the lymphatic system we are missing a huge opportunity to prevent and better manage most chronic conditions.

Certainly we are all extremely reliant on the heart, arteries, veins and capillaries to feed and nourish cells for healthy reproduction. But just like with any system, every set of inputs creates output. It is the lymphatic system's job to remove the by-products and wastes in the body. If the clean-up crew doesn't show up, the garbage won't be taken out and we all know this doesn't provide for a very pretty picture.



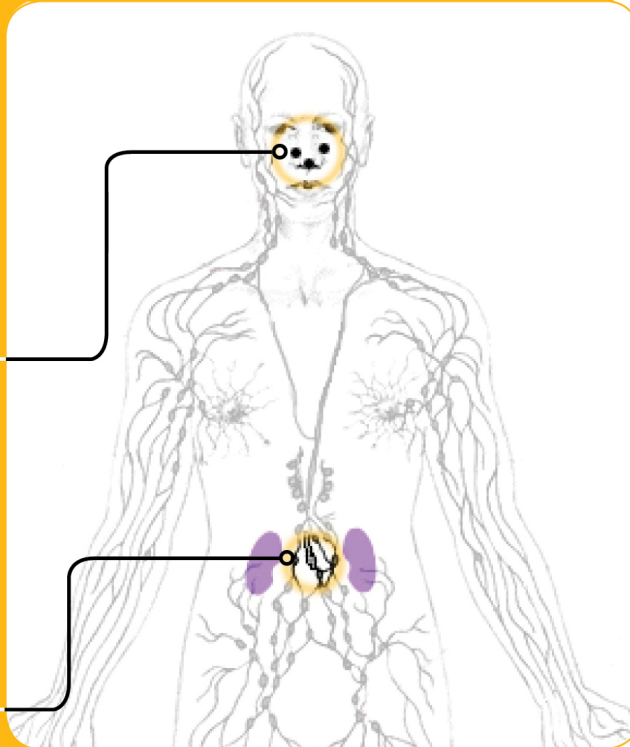
What does cellular garbage look like? Well, it probably doesn't LOOK like much on its own, but it is acidic waste and the list is long on what it DOES to your body—damage to your cells, tissues and organs—and lots of it. Everything from moderate symptoms such as acne and yeast infections to the serious chronic conditions of our times—obesity, auto-immune issues, fertility issues, Alzheimer's and cancer—are results of accumulated waste.

So, while giving the heart all the credit it deserves, I want to keep your focus on your lymphatic system if you, like me, want to stay on the side of preventing dis-ease not having to overcome it.

While I shared an overview of the lymphatic system in my Lymphatic System 101 post, I want to discuss this graphic in further detail, as I will be referring to it over and over again in future issues.

Anyone who suffers with headaches, neck pain, or sinusitis might not be surprised to hear that one of the cisterns is located in the head. Within the subarachnoid space there are actually a series of smaller cisterns all which collect lymph at the base of the brain. When I discuss acidosis of the head these are the areas affected that must be drained. While headaches and sinusitis are painful, they are not nearly as serious as other chronic conditions like migraines and X that can and will develop if the acidosis is not reversed. ○

Low back pain sufferers take note... the greatest accumulations seems to occur here in the cisterna chyli located right between our two kidneys. This dilated sac in the lumbar region of the abdominal cavity is meant to be a temporary hold for the fatty lymph from the intestinal tract. In a healthy system, this fluid transverses from the lower body upwards. But when the fluid collects it causes inflammation = pain. ○



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Lymphatic Cisterns

Today I want to draw your attention to two areas that seem to accumulate lymph and are most often seen as the “pain” centers of the body. These two cisterns can become lakes of built up waste when the system is not functioning optimally.

Low back pain sufferers take note...the greatest accumulation seems to occur here in the cisterna chyli located right between our two kidneys. This dilated sac in the lumbar region of the abdominal cavity is meant to be a temporary hold for the fatty lymph from the intestinal tract. In a healthy system, this fluid transverses from the lower body upwards. But when there is stagnation, the fluid collects and causes inflammation and inflammation equals pain.

Anyone who suffers with headaches, neck pain, or sinusitis might not be surprised to hear the other cistern is located in the head. Within the subarachnoid space there are actually a series of smaller cisterns all which collect lymph at the base

of the brain. When I discuss acidosis of the head these are exactly the areas affected that must be drained. While headaches and sinusitis are painful, left untreated the acidosis can lead to much deeper chronic dis-ease such as migraines, Parkinson's, and autoimmune conditions.

Realizing that the body has these overflow areas for stagnant lymph may help you better understand chronic localized pain and come to see that you don't have to live with it. Awareness is always the first step in healing and when you are ready for the next step I have a place for you to start.

Lymphatic System 101

The amazing human body was designed to be completely self cleaning. The lymphatic system is the star of this process and its job is to remove wastes from the cells. Clean cells produce clean tissue and reproduce clean, healthy cells. As important and fundamental to our health as this system is, it certainly tends to be overlooked and underrated.

I believe these two things to be true:

1. Taking note and addressing a compromised lymphatic system in a child will prevent future chronic conditions.
2. Simple but mindful efforts by adults will support the lymphatic system to clean up residual waste and encourage the body to heal from a wide array of chronic conditions.

To be able to address and clean up a compromised system and support the work of your healthy system we need to understand some basics. Here are some cool FAQ's to get you up to speed:

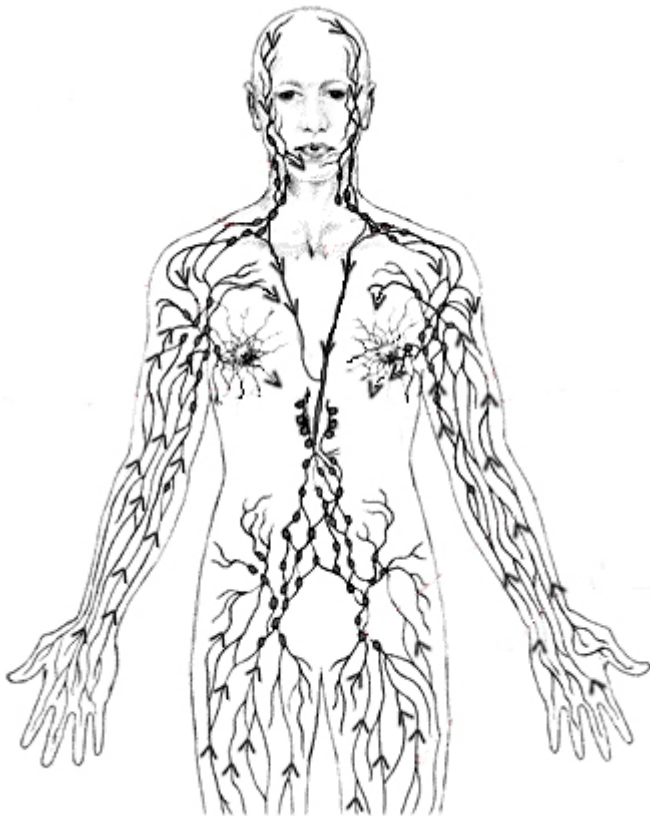
What are the components to the lymphatic system?

- Lymphatic Fluid: the clear fluid around the cells that carries away waste product.
- Lymphatic Vessels: collect this fluid and send it towards the center of the body. There are 2x as many lymph vessels as there are blood vessels!
- Lymphatic Nodes & Organs: are the filtering stations and include Bone Marrow, Thymus, Spleen, Tonsils-Adenoids, Appendix, and Nodes. We are home to 400-700 lymph nodes, half which reside in our abdomen.

How does lymphatic fluid move?

Unlike the circulatory system that can count on the powerhouse of the heart, lymph fluid is propelled through the lymph vessels by the rhythmic contractions of teeny muscular units called lymphangions.

Here is the direction the fluid flows in a healthy body:



What can cause lymphatic stagnation?

- **An Acidic Environment.** Lymph drains optimally in an alkaline environment. While under stress, the body is forced to manufacture and secrete excess stress-fighting hormones to boost energy. It is the waste products of these hormones that are very acidic. Chronic stress is known to shift the chemistry of the body to an acidic state leading to lymph congestion.
- **Chronic Digestive Imbalances** may irritate intestinal villi, which is a classic cause for lymph congestion. As the majority of the lymph in the body surrounds the gut, the quality of the villi is critical for proper lymph flow, detoxification, assimilation and immunity.
- **Dehydration** can contribute to poor lymphatic drainage and cause lymphatic stagnation. Here is a great ayurvedic test and cure for dehydration. **Test:** Sip hot water every 10-15 minutes throughout the day. Do it religiously for one day. If by the end of that day you are experiencing a dry mouth and are now thirsty for this once tasteless sip of hot water, this is a good indication you are dehydrated and your lymph is congested. **Cure:** Try this rehydration therapy, sip hot water every 10-15 minutes for 2 weeks straight. Keep a thermos of hot water nearby to make it easy to follow this protocol.

What are some early symptoms of lymphatic stagnation?

- Soreness and/or stiffness in the morning
- Morning brain fog
- Bloating, swelling or heaviness in extremities
- Itchy or dry skin
- Breast swelling or soreness with each cycle
- Slow or sluggish bowels

Because understanding and supporting a healthy lymphatic system is such a vital key to your overall health I'll be

sharing more about it in the next few weeks.

Midweek Pause–Joy



Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.

-Thich Nhat Hanh

Consider: It is so easy in the commotion of it all to get to the point where we say, “I just don’t know what makes me happy anymore.”

In all our busy-ness we can lose ourselves and knowledge of what makes us truly happy. We lose track of why we do what we do and we forget what used to bring us joy.

Today’s pause is meant to bring you back to your childhood to reconnect with what used to bring joy—on the simplest level.

Prepare: Close your eyes and visualize a much younger you. Place your hands on your heart and take in three cleansing breaths. Feel what it was like to be so free and connected with your own heartsong.

You are five or six years old—maybe even younger. Your mom or dad is calling you in from your playtime and you just cannot stop what you are doing. What is it you were doing? What is it that you were so immersed in? What allowed you to be fully yourself? What song was your heart singing?

What could you do today that would make you feel like that if even for a few short moments in time?

Do: Today do one thing that makes your true heart sing. Consider repeating each day this week.

Making Time for Illness

Dealing with my own personal version of an upper respiratory inflammation this weekend, I put myself to bed, which gave me plenty of time to reflect on a lot of random things. I'm sharing some for your amusement, but others are more significant, so I hope you will take them to heart.

My bed-ridden random thoughts/concerns...

1. You know you are really sick when shopping online totally loses its appeal.
2. When I get better I absolutely need to buy new bed pillows.
3. Can we possibly have enough fruit to see me through this?

I came to appreciate a few things such as...

1. That both the men I share the house with can cook...well, sort of.
2. My husband, who apparently felt I was missing a brilliant opportunity for spiritual growth, made available all of Deepak's latest talks (link?).

3. My three children who each shower me with love in three unique ways; one delivered a juice at arms distance while she backed out of the bedroom, one called from Malibu beach to share how wonderful I would feel if only I was at the sea, and, alas, one who was delighted by the fact he finally had me as a captive audience to all of his undeniably amazing ideas.

What I really thought about was how getting sick used to scare me and how grateful I am that is no longer true.

As a child and into adulthood the fear of the unknown as to what was happening in my body left me both frightened and vulnerable. Rather than understanding the natural rhythm of the healing process, I felt betrayed by a body that would not respond to my pushing it to perform. As it often is in life, some lessons are harder than others and I had to get really, really sick enough times to learn about the body's natural process from the inside out.



I know many of you have experienced a time or two that your body has “betrayed” you—whether it’s struggling with an acute illness or long term chronic conditions. It is easy to begin to feel at the mercy of symptoms where you are forced to ride the waves of weakness, discomfort or severe pain without knowing the source or what (if anything) you might be able to do to help yourself feel better. This sense of helplessness

only exacerbates that low-level fear we all have about being unwell.

In this state of fear we lose sight of our own vital force and what our body needs to do to heal itself. Better understanding these needs, providing support and watching the response to this care can be quite empowering. Here is the roadmap I use when I start to feel my body slowing down:

So when I could feel the exhaustion, sore throat and headache suddenly appear...

I stopped in my tracks and shifted gears—just like I would tell each and every one of you. And here is what I did next:

- Went straight to bed and stayed there for 24 hours (and a bit more, truth be told)
- Cancelled all appointments the next day
- Started an acute gemmo protocol for flu-like symptoms
- Began pushing fluids such as ginger tea, Texas Medicinals Tonika tea, coconut water, and fresh juices
- Stopped eating solid foods for 24 hours
- Used a hot water bottle as needed for aches and chills
- Slept when I needed to
- Read on and off
- Made the first appointment available with our family acupuncturist to help my body drain off what it was trying to rid in the first place.

This time, like I have for some years now, I watched with wonder as my amazing body did exactly what it needed to do to get well. It stopped me in my tracks physically, my cognitive skills slowed, focus diminished and my energies were turned inward. I knew this was all supposed to happen so that all my energy could be directed at the healing process. I ached from head to toe as the acids released and my body produced a fever. Because I stayed put, supported my elimination systems with gemmos, increased consumption of fluids, and did not divert energy needed from healing by digesting food I did not need, I got well quite quickly.

Forty-eight hours into my healing process I felt my brain fill with creative ideas and my sense of humor return—both being

sure signs my physical energy would surely follow. When it does I will use it wisely, saving the lap swimming until I can make it through the essentials of each day with some energy in reserve.

When we come to a stop, and give in to the physical desire to take to your bed and rest you give that energy over for the more important tasks at hand. While it is tempting and endorsed across our culture to push through, the whole healing process is dramatically slowed and symptoms will carry on for weeks. While we all like to think that we can just "tough it out," the best thing you can do to feel better faster is to stop and let your body rest. Listening to your body when it quietly asks for care is much quicker and healthier than putting it off until it demands attention.