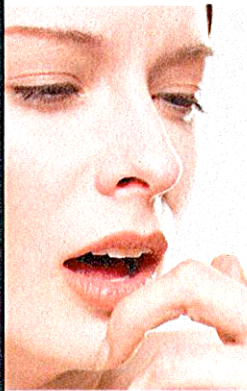


health NEWS & TRENDS

THINGS THAT MAKE Allergies Worse



► Stressful deadlines.

In a 2008 experiment, researchers at Ohio State University College of Medicine found that allergy sufferers had more symptoms after they took an anxiety-inducing test, compared with when they performed a task that did not make them tense. Stress hormones may stimulate the production of IgE, blood proteins

that cause allergic reactions, says study author Janice Kiecolt-Glaser, PhD.

GET RELIEF If you're under stress, get enough sleep. A sleep deficit can worsen both allergy symptoms and stress, she says.

► **An extra glass of wine with dinner.** Alcohol can raise the risk of perennial allergic rhinitis by 3% for every additional alcoholic beverage consumed each week, Danish researchers found. One potential reason: Bacteria and yeast in the alcohol produce histamines, chemicals that cause telltale allergy symptoms like stuffy nose and itchy eyes.

GET RELIEF Avoid alcohol when your symptoms are acting up, says Richard F. Lockey, MD, director of the Division of Allergy and Immunology at the University of South Florida College of Medicine.

► **Waiting too long to take meds.** Medications that block histamines work best before you're even exposed to allergens, says allergist James Sublett, MD, a spokesperson for the American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology.

GET RELIEF Start medication a couple of weeks before the season commences or before you'll be around allergens (if you react to grass, before a golf game, for example). —LG