

Natural Help 4...

Angioedema



What are Angioedema?

Angioedema is a type of swelling of the skin and mucous membranes that generally occurs in soft tissue of the skin and mucous membranes. Similar to **hives which affect the surface layer of the skin**, angioedema causes swollen welts in the deeper layers of the skin and tends to affect areas such as the face, eyelids, mouth, lips, tongue, hands, feet, and genitals.

Types of angioedema

There are **two types of angioedema**, allergic and hereditary angioedema. Allergic angioedema is usually triggered by some allergy or irritant and often occurs together with hives. While most cases of allergic angioedema are not serious and tend to disappear between a few minutes and a few days, the condition can be quite distressing, causing discomfort, self-consciousness, pain and itchiness. On rare occasions where angioedema occurs in the throat or mouth, normal breathing or swallowing can become difficult and airways may become altogether blocked. In situations like this, angioedema is life-threatening and must be treated as a medical emergency.

Hereditary angioedema (HAE) on the other hand is a rare, inherited and more serious form of angioedema that is not associated with allergies or hives. This genetic condition often causes recurrent attacks of angioedema which amongst other areas, commonly affects the lining of the gastrointestinal tract causing severe pain. HAE is a potentially fatal disease with a mortality rate as high as 30% as a result of upper airway swelling.

Diagnosing Angioedema

A thorough medical history and physical examination of the affected area is usually enough to make a diagnosis of angioedema. Your health care practitioner will need to know if you or members of your family have any **allergies or a history of skin rashes**, and if necessary, a skin prick test may be recommended to help identify allergens. Remember to inform your physician of any medication you may be taking, as angioedema is a common side-effect of many pharmaceutical drugs.

If hereditary angioedema is suspected, then blood tests will be necessary to make an accurate diagnosis.

What Causes Angioedema?

Angioedema is usually caused when an allergic reaction is triggered and

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histamines are released into the bloodstream. This exaggerated immune reaction is often **set off by one of many possible allergens or triggers**, and in many cases, the exact cause of [angioedema](#) goes unidentified.

Some common causes include:

- Common allergens including pollen, dust mites, animal dander, latex and insect bites or stings.
- Almost all pharmaceutical drugs have the potential to trigger [angioedema](#) as a side effect. Commonly implicated medications include antibiotics, aspirin, ibuprofen, blood pressure medications and some anti-inflammatory drugs.
- Certain foods tend to trigger reactions in sensitive people. Common culprits include shellfish, fish, nuts, wheat, soybeans, eggs and milk.
- Pressure on the skin or a scratch can trigger a histamine response resulting in [angioedema](#). This is often referred to as dermatographism.
- In some cases illness or infections can cause [angioedema](#). Autoimmune diseases, thyroid disorders, cancer, hepatitis and even a cold can trigger a reaction.

Other triggers include allergy shots, emotional stress, and certain **environmental and physical factors** such as heat, cold, sunlight, exercise, pregnancy or menstruation in women.

Hereditary [angioedema](#) is caused by an **inherited genetic problem** that causes abnormal functioning of certain blood proteins necessary for regulating immune system functions.

Help for Angioedema

If the [symptoms of angioedema](#) are mild and are not causing too much discomfort or pain, then medical treatment is generally not necessary and the condition should soon disappear by itself. For those with more **severe, persistent, or reoccurring symptoms**, there are a few treatment options worth exploring. Keep in mind that any [angioedema](#) that causes difficulty breathing, or swallowing, or should you feel your throat is swelling, immediate medical attention should be sought.

[Angioedema](#) is conventionally treated with prescription or over-the-counter anti-histamines such as diphenhydramine or loratadine. Keep in mind that many **antihistamines come with unwanted side effects** such as drowsiness, dizziness, poor coordination, nervousness, and diarrhea. If used over long periods of time, a tolerance to the drug may develop, causing it to lose its effectiveness.

In emergency situations, an injection of epinephrine (adrenaline) is usually given to quickly reduce symptoms. If [angioedema](#) is a frequent problem, your physician **may recommend an epinephrine auto-injector kit** that can be self-administered in an emergency.

Both epinephrine and antihistamines are usually ineffective when treating hereditary [angioedema](#). Treatment often involves the long-term use of male sex hormones (androgens) which helps to **regulate the production of blood proteins**, and in emergency situations, a blood transfusion may be necessary.



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Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

Natural Remedies

Many herbal and homeopathic ingredients have been shown to be incredibly successful at easing the bothersome symptoms of allergies and **effectively relieving inflammation**. Examples of such ingredients include Quercetin, which is well known for its ability to block the release of histamine, and Urtica urens, which has been used for many centuries in folk medicine to treat both inflammation and allergies. Other ingredients such as Plantago lanceolata and Allium cepa are commonly used to **reduce swelling, soothe itchiness**, and ease the irritation of mucous membranes.

Tips on Prevention

While mild allergic [angioedema](#) may not require medical treatment, there are a number of self-care and prevention tips that may help to ease the symptoms and prevent recurrent flare ups.

- Get to know your triggers and avoid them. Try keeping a diary of flare ups and possible allergens or irritants that you were exposed to at the time to help identify your triggers.
- Use a cool compress to soothe the skin and reduce discomfort.
- Avoid irritating or scratching the affected area, as this will increase swelling. Wear loose-fitting and light clothing that doesn't rub on the swelling.
- A cool shower or soak in the bath will help reduce swelling and discomfort, but stay clear of hot baths or showers, as this will aggravate the [angioedema](#).
- Avoid activities that may cause perspiration.
- Relax, de-stress and work towards resolving emotional issues that may be triggering the condition.
- Incorporate yogurt with acidophilus into your diet to help reduce inflammation.

The Natural Approach

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is not the only treatment option. Conventional western medicine, often called allopathic medicine, is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools and most pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine. Allopathic medicine is also sometimes called orthodox medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that, only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available – and freely used even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is 'better' than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that both have a role to play in the treatment program.

Natural medicine has often been frowned on by conventional doctors, especially by those who did not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe,

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India and China, natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed by conventional doctors and represent a significant part of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the body has an innate capacity to heal itself. While natural medicines are often called 'alternative' or 'complimentary' medicines, they are, in fact, a unique and independent form of medicine in their own right, well able to treat a variety of conditions. Perhaps the term 'holistic' medicine is more apt, given the broad range of treatment options and approaches which are to be found within the practice of natural medicine, which encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a holistic way to support health, relieve symptoms and prevent future disease. In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "... more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which strives to support health (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer and that, in many cases, holistic medicine can accomplish just as much, if not more – without the risk of side effects, addiction and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Contrary to common perception, and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way, natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing.

In many cases, they can succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed. Despite frequent reports that they are 'unproven' and 'untested', the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a long history of usage and there is a wealth of empirical evidence to support their effectiveness and safety. In addition, active clinical research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines.

It is also important to know that, like any medicine, herbal and homeopathic medicines must be manufactured in the correct way, following acceptable procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market – and giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called 'standardized' extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While 'standardized' extracts may offer benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper more efficient production lines), they have grave disadvantages. These include an increase in side effects as the medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties of the herbs. In some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity



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associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the Full Spectrum Method of extraction – which retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a more complete treatment as well as superior protection against side effects.

Whatever your choice, always choose wisely. Research what is best for you. If you have a chronic or life threatening condition, don't make changes without first discussing them with your doctor in order that your condition may be monitored. Well informed and supportive practitioners will support patients who want to take responsibility for their own health.

Related Natural Remedies:

AllergiClear: Stay allergy-free using natural immune system support

AllergiClear is a 100% natural remedy developed by experts in the field of natural health and especially formulated to **support a healthy immune system as well as respiratory and skin health.**

AllergiClear is a compound remedy containing herbal and nutritional ingredients known for their positive effect in **maintaining histamine levels within the normal range** and supporting clear eyes, noses, sinuses and healthy problem free skin.

Taken regularly, AllergiClear can make all the difference and help you to enjoy the outdoors once again!

[Learn more about AllergiClear](#)

SOSHistaDrops: Helps maintain healthy, clear eyes and noses during the allergy season

SOS HistaDrops combine natural ingredients known for their ability to **maintain balance in the immune system** and to support histamine levels within the normal range – supporting clear eyes, noses and easy breathing.

Manufactured in a fast-acting tincture formula, SOS HistaDrops provides on-the-spot support when you need it. This safe and **effective natural formula can be used by adults and children**

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Read the testimonials for these quality products [here!](#)

Six Good Reasons to choose Native Remedies as your trusted suppliers of herbal & homeopathic remedies:

1) All Native Remedies products are manufactured according to the highest pharmaceutical standards - using only the best quality raw ingredients from nature's medicine chest.

2) Native Remedies and our suppliers are registered with the FDA as accredited suppliers and manufacturers of health supplements. Our products are sold all over the world and are manufactured to strict international standards in a GMP accredited manufacturing plant.

3) All our remedies are manufactured in an FDA registered pharmaceutical facility under close supervision.

This includes formulation, acquiring and testing of raw ingredients as well as final manufacturing. This gives us the confidence to say that when you are buying a Native Remedies product, you are buying the safest and the best! We know what goes into our remedies - which is why we know what you will get out of them!

4) Manufacturing is done strictly according to the principles of GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) and all raw ingredients undergo stringent testing before being approved by our registered manufacturing pharmacists.

5) We offer a free email [Ask Our Experts](#) service run by trained consultants ready to advise you on the best choice for your health.

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