



“We shall, by and by, want a world of hemp more for our own consumption.”

~ John Adams

WELCOME TO A NEW WORLD IN HEALTH CARE.

2019 is here. Its been a roller coaster of a year for Canadian health and especially for the Canadian Cannabis industry. This is the first January since its original prohibition that cannabis has been legal in Canada and we at the Medical Marijuana Public Resource couldn't be happier.

This month in our MMJ newsletter we have a pair of articles to improve your sleep and help right winter allergies.



Top Ten Ways to Fight Allergies and Boost Your Immune System

Common allergies such as hay fever are not usually life-threatening, but they're nothing to sneeze at either, and an allergic reaction may trigger a more serious event such as an asthma attack. You can adapt your daily activities to protect yourself.

1. Ward off hay fever with honey.

If you are allergic to pollen, raw honey may be the answer. It contains traces of pollen, so eating a few tablespoons a day may help to accustom your immune system to pollen and stop it from triggering hay fever. Make sure the honey you use is raw and try to buy it from a source close to home so that it contains pollen from your area.

2. Eat an orange every morning.

Oranges are rich in vitamin C, which acts as a natural antihistamine. Some studies have found a connection between allergies and low levels of vitamin C, so you may want to consider taking a vitamin C supplement too.

3. Water houseplants sparingly.

Overwatering houseplants can contribute to the growth of mould in your home.

4. Spend the weekend decluttering.

Get rid of any clothing you haven't worn in a couple of years. Store sports equipment in the garage or storage area where it belongs. When you finish, give everything a good vacuum to reduce significantly the amount of dust in your house.

5. Avoid foods containing monosodium benzoate.

An Italian study found that the food preservative monosodium benzoate was responsible for triggering allergy-like symptoms, including sneezing and nasal itching, in adults without allergies. Monosodium benzoate is commonly found in juices, pie fillings, pickles, olives and salad dressings.

6. Keep your thermostat set above 18 C in winter.

If you set your thermostat too low, you will encourage the growth of mould in damp air. Heat dries the air, preventing mould, though air that's too dry can also irritate your lungs and sinuses. An inexpensive humidity meter could help the perfect level is about 50 percent.

7. Take algae for allergies.

Try drinks or supplements that contain spirulina, a blue-green algae. Spirulina is a powerful anti-inflammatory agent and can help to quell an over-reactive response of the immune system to triggers such as pollen.

In a study that involved giving a group of hay-fever sufferers a daily dose of 2000 mg spirulina, researchers recorded a reduction of approximately 32 percent in the severity of hay-fever symptoms.



8. Clean out your gutters.

Clogged gutters can result in water seeping into the house, leading to mould growth, which can exacerbate allergies. Next time it rains, check your gutters. If you see water leaking out of the end caps, flowing on the outside or dripping behind them, it's time to get out the ladder.

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9. Install hard-surface flooring

Carpets are breeding grounds for dust mites and mould and do a wonderful job of capturing animal dander and pollen—only to release it every time you vacuum or even just walk on it. Wood, tile or laminate floors are the best for people with allergies.

10. Check Your Flavonoids

Abundant in all types of plants, flavonoids (or bio-flavonoids) comprise a large group of water-soluble compounds known for their antioxidant properties. Most are colourless but some are responsible for the yellow and red/blue hues seen in many fruit and vegetables. Plants use the chemicals to attract pollinators, signal ripeness and to protect against attacks against microbes. For humans, the consumption of flavonoids with their antioxidant, antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory characteristics, may help to boost your immune system. Of these more than 4,000 compounds, quercetin and the citrus flavonoids are perhaps the best known. In test tube experiments, quercetin was shown to prevent immune cells from releasing histamine, thereby offering relief from allergies, asthma, hay fever and hives. The consumption of flavonoids, with their anti-oxidant, antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory characteristics' may help boost your immune system and offer some protection against a variety of ailments. Of the more than 4000 compounds, quercetin and the citrus flavonoids are perhaps the best known. They can be purchased as tablets, capsules or lozenges. Check with your doctor first!



Sleeping Positions and Your Bedroom



If you're waking up sore and aching each morning, you need to re-evaluate the positions in which you're sleeping and the quality of your mattress and pillows. There may be other features of your bedroom that could be improved to enhance comfort and relaxation.

Try not to lie flat on your back

Lying in this position forces your spine into an unnatural position, which can strain your muscles, joints and nerves. Your spine isn't meant to be straight—it has three natural curves: one in your lower back, one in the middle of your back and one near your neck.

Adopt the fetal position

Lie on your side in the fetal position with your knees bent and a pillow tucked between your legs. This will take the most stress off your back and is particularly suitable for people with back pain.

Put a pillow under your knees

If you must sleep on your back, prop a big fluffy pillow under your knees to reduce the pressure on the sciatic nerve in your lower back.



Think about neck support

If you find yourself tossing and turning as you try to get comfortable, consider buying a special neck-supporting pillow. They are specially designed for people who have neck pain or tension that prevent sleep.

One Swedish study found that neck pillows can enhance the quality of your sleep as well as reduce neck pain. The ideal neck pillow should be soft and not too high, provide neck support and be allergy-tested and washable. Alternatively, use an ordinary small pillow or a rolled-up towel under your neck as long as it doesn't push your chin too far forward.

Don't sleep on your front

Sleeping face down can exaggerate the arch at the base of your spine and cause strain—unless you have sciatica, in which case lying on your front is the recommended position.

Ease heartburn

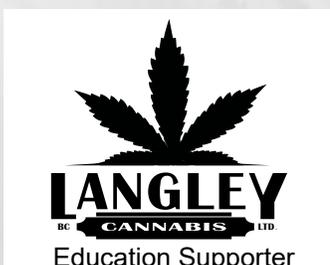
You can counteract the discomfort of indigestion by raising the head of your bed 10–15 cm with wooden blocks or old phone books. When you sleep tilted at an angle, gravity helps to keep acid in the stomach.

Cool your bedroom

Turn any heating off (or at least right down) before going to bed. Most people sleep better when the air around them is cool and their bedding is snug.

Buy a bigger bed

If you share a bed, consider buying a queen or king-size bed so that you and your partner don't keep each other awake. Some mattresses are designed so that when your partner moves you feel nothing. Or consider sleeping in separate beds.



Move your bed away from an outside wall

This will help to cut down on noise, which according to a Spanish study, could be a significant factor in causing insomnia. If you are still bothered by noise even after moving your bed, try a white-noise machine or turn on a fan.

Invest in a good mattress

If your mattress is 10 or more years old, you need a new one. If your mattress is lumpy, ditch it. Another sign that your mattress needs replacing is waking up feeling sore or stiff, even if you haven't been physically active the day before. Although no single style of mattress works best for everybody, there are some guidelines to follow:

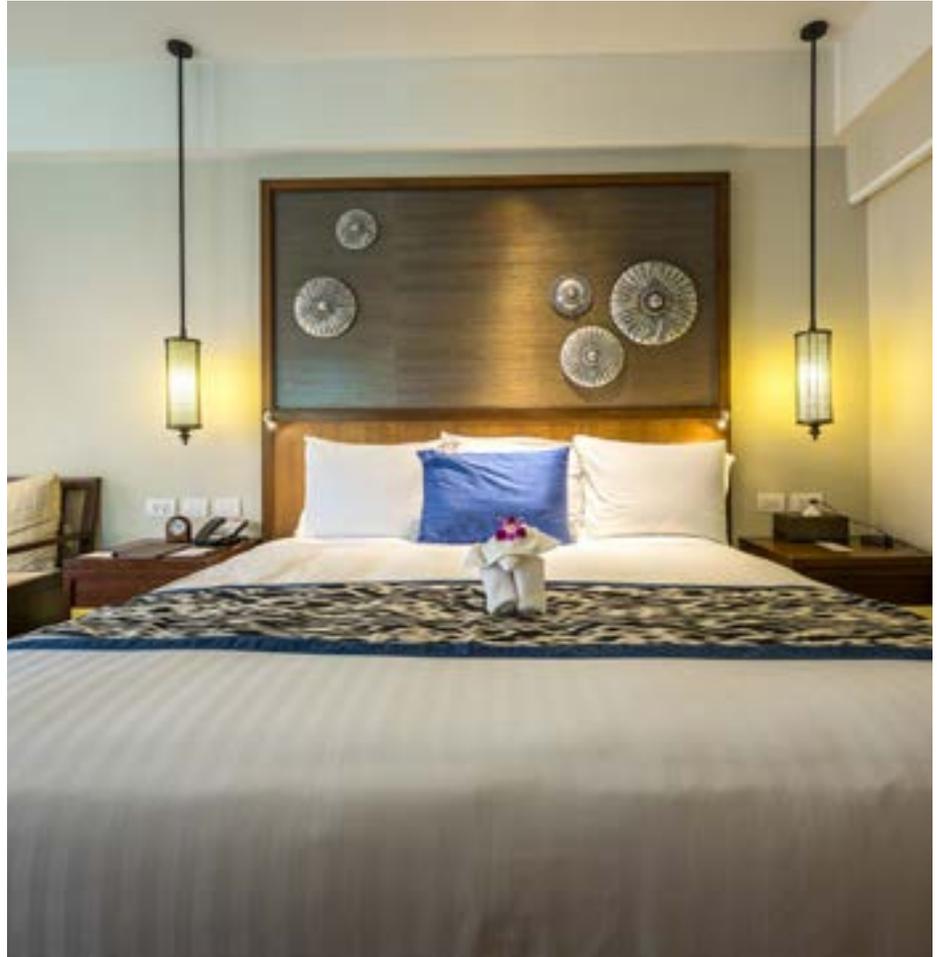
Size Make sure you buy one that's larger than you think you will need, especially if you sleep with someone else.

Firmness This is strictly an individual decision. But make sure you try out any mattress in the shop.

Lie on it. Roll over. Get into your typical sleeping position.

Good-quality frame Make sure you get a sturdy, good-quality metal frame or a wooden one with at least 10 slats.

Maintenance Turn your mattress over and upside down every three months.



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