

VICKERSTAFF HEALTH SERVICES

HISTAMINE INTOLERANCE

Histamine intolerance may also be referred to as Histamine sensitivity and
Histamine excess

SOME USEFUL INFORMATION

- **Histamine intolerance is a result of a person's total histamine exceeding their body's requirements.**

The excess is usually broken down by specific enzymes, especially diamine oxidase (DAO). However, if the amount of histamine in the body exceeds the enzymes' ability to break it down fast enough, symptoms of histamine excess, or histamine intolerance occur.

- **Symptoms of histamine excess closely resemble allergy.**

That is because large quantities of histamine are released in an allergic reaction. The first signs of allergy therefore are a result of an overwhelming amount of histamine in the body.

- **Histamine intolerance and food allergy differ in a very important respect.**

Symptoms of allergy typically occur immediately, or very soon after the person consumes their allergenic food or beverage. With histamine intolerance histamine has to build up to a level that exceeds the enzymes' ability to break it down. This means that histamine intolerance is dose-related and symptom onset is delayed.



This can be likened to a bucket filling up with water. As long as the level of water in the bucket remains below the top, all is well. However, when the water reaches the top and overflows, everything gets wet. It takes time and an increase in water flowing into the bucket before it overflows. It is the same with histamine. As long as a person's histamine level does not exceed the enzymes' ability to keep it below the top of the bucket (which we refer to as an individual's limit of tolerance), all is well. When the histamine overflows the top of the bucket, symptoms occur.

- **Make sure that you are consuming a balanced diet**

A histamine restricted diet will help to keep the histamine from overflowing. However, just taking the histamine-containing and histamine-releasing foods out of your diet is not enough. You must be very careful to replace all of the eliminated foods with others of the same nutritional value in order to maintain good health.

- **Antihistamines should not be taken as a preventative.**

Antihistamine are useful as a “rescue remedy” for occasional use, but used daily as a preventative therapy have an adverse effect. Antihistamines act by blocking sites on

body cells that would normally act as receptors for histamine. The receptors act as entry-ways into the cell to allow histamine to carry out its function. Antihistamines stop histamine activity by blocking their entrance. If this blockage is constant the immune system sees this as a problem, and senses that it must be producing inadequate levels of histamine. It therefore increases its production of histamine. Consequently, over the long term, there is even more histamine for the enzymes to break down, and the problem of histamine intolerance becomes even worse.

- [Alkaline salts provide a natural alternative to pharmaceutical antihistamines](#)

Alkaline salts are often very effective in controlling symptoms of histamine excess.

Formula: 2:1 ratio of sodium bicarbonate to potassium bicarbonate

Ingredients:

2 Tablespoons sodium bicarbonate (baking soda)

1 Tablespoon potassium bicarbonate

Method:

Mix well

Place mixture in an airtight jar

Take ½ teaspoon in warm water

Symptoms should resolve fairly rapidly

A second dosage can be taken 20-30 minutes later if symptoms have not completely resolved.

Note: Potassium bicarbonate is a natural salt and does not require a prescription.

According to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), potassium bicarbonate is noted as GRAS (generally recognized as safe).

If you have difficulty in finding potassium bicarbonate locally, food-grade potassium bicarbonate can be obtained from <http://www.amazon.com/Potassium-Bicarbonate-Food-Grade-Powder/dp/B00BPUTXGQ>

as well as other sites on the internet.

- **Diamine oxidase supplements**

Diamine oxidase, one of the important enzymes that break down excess histamine, is available as a supplement. It is marketed as Histaminase and DAOsin, among other names. It can be effective as an adjunct to a histamine-restricted diet, and may be useful on occasions when you are planning to eat histamine-containing foods. However, there is no evidence that DAO supplements will allow you to eat histamine-associated foods regularly. In other words, you cannot expect DAO to allow you to consume your usual diet, especially if that diet contains many histamine-associated foods. If you are histamine intolerant you will need to follow a histamine-restricted diet for the long term to control your symptoms.