***Allergy Relief - Enjoy the Superbloom***  
The super bloom in Southern California this spring is magnificent, but the unusually high pollen count can be a downside impacting those with hay fever or allergic rhinitis.  
Allergies when left untreated can lead to lowered immune system, fatigue, upper respiratory or sinus infections.  
  
Here are some holistic approaches that are both preventive and help with symptomatic relief:  
**1. Saline Nasal Rinse:** Irrigating the nasal passages with a saline solution on a daily basis significantly reduces allergic rhinitis symptoms. Saline rinse kits are readily available at any drug store. Read and follow the instructions carefully and watch the recommended video tutorials online before first use.  
**2. Supplements & Vitamins:** Quercetin, bromelain, probiotics, vitamin C and high quality fish oil help reduce allergies due to their high anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. Foods such pineapple, green tea, green apples, berries and onions are sources of naturally occurring anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compounds that help with hay fever. Consult with your health care provider prior to taking any new supplements.  
**3. Chinese Medicine:** A time tested medicine, it safely addresses both the symptoms and the root cause of allergies using acupuncture and herbal formulas. Treatments are customized based on an individual’s constitution, history and symptoms.  
**4. Limiting Exposure:** Limiting exposure also helps reduce symptoms. Avoid outdoor activities early in the morning when the pollen count is at its peak. Consider using HEPA filter air purifiers at home or office.  
**5. Foods to Avoid:** Foods that are inflammatory or mucus forming aggravate allergies. If you suffer from hay fever avoid or significantly limit your intake of dairy (especially milk and cheese), refined sugar and processed foods. This is also a good general guideline if you have any kind of chronic inflammation, autoimmune condition or are simply interested in adopting a healthy diet.  
  
Don’t let allergies keep you indoors. With proper care you can enjoy the super bloom allergy free.  
  
  
Contributed by Homa Sikon, L.Ac., Acupuncture By Homa