

How to Determine What's Causing Hives

Learning to determine what's causing hives is crucial for those suffering itchy, reddened, bumpy, skin that feels horrible and looks awful too. Unlike conditions such as common colds, flues, measles, and chicken pocks that affect victims by implanting viral germs, hives can affect its victims whether or not germs are triggers.

Multitudes of determinants play roles in triggering hive onsets and not all people susceptible to hives develop them due to the same triggers. For this reason, when people experience hives outbreaks for the first time, they must immediately recall everything they ate and drank within the previous two hours or so. They must recollect whether an insect bit them. They must also recall medications they took.

In addition to consumption, animal, and plant activators, hives can be triggered from heat and from cold. This means hives victims may also need to assess whether their outbreak is temperature related. Temperature related assessments should transpire whenever recent activities did not involve consuming foodstuff, liquid, or medications, and if victims had no contact with insets or plants.

Nothing like enjoying a hot shower or a cool swim only to have your skin grow welts or wheals, imitating insect bites, in the midst of your enjoyment. For some, however, this is exactly what could happen if their hives triggers are temperature related. For these hives sufferers anything too cold or too hot can give them a case of itchy, bumpy, welts about their skin.

Sufferers of temperature activated hives have conditions known as "physical urticaria" when their hives triggers are set off

by cold and “cholinergic urticaria” when their hives are set off by heat.

Hive victims can determine if their hives trigger is cold related by placing or having someone else place and hold an ice cube on their arm for five minutes or so and then waiting roughly ten minutes following ice removal to see if the skin develops a hive at the ice placement site. With that said, however, it should be noted that cold related hive triggers come in two types – “acquired” and “familial”. A person with familial urticaria may need to keep the ice on their arm for a longer period in order to determine whether cold triggers their hives breakouts. Therefore, if negative results appear after initial testing, a second test during which the ice cube remains at the test site for roughly twenty to thirty minutes should be performed.

Determining what’s causing hives in sufferers with suspected heat related triggers (cholinergic urticaria) can be accomplished by submitting sufferers to skin injection tests. These tests come in two forms – acetylcholine and nicotine. Other methods involve submitting patients to other heat related tests such as overdressing while exercising, or placing body parts, usually arms, in tubs or sinks of warmed water to see if their skin becomes bumpy and red with itchy hives.

Triggers for some types of hives may not be as easily determined, however likely indicators could help sufferers figure out the type of hives they endure. For examples, papular urticaria, the most common type of hives are recurrent, may last about a month, and consist of bumps that look like blisters filled with fluid. Determining factors usually involve sufferers incurring insect bites, eating foods they are allergic to, taking certain medications, or ordinary environmental exposures.

In cases of “acute” papular urticaria, sufferers may also

notice that hives presented after they were bitten by an insect, after they ate something, or after they took medication. However, triggers for acute papular urticaria may not always be determined. In cases where triggers go undetermined sufferers are advised to stop taking nonessential medications until the hives cease.

Determining triggers in sufferers with "chronic" papular urticaria may be the most difficult to assess because these triggers may go unidentified even more often than triggers for acute forms. Medical professionals usually advise these sufferers to minimize stresses in their lives and to avoid smoking, drinking alcohol, consuming caffeine, and taking certain medications such as aspirin.

Hives sufferers exposed to plants prior to their outbreaks may suffer hives related to poison ivy, poison oak, or poison sumac. These three poisonous plants have leaves that look like ordinary green leaves and grow wild in places passers by may not expect them to be. All it takes is a stroke of a finger or a brushing of an unsuspecting ankle to trigger a hives outbreak. In addition, victims of these ivy and oak related hives may acquire outbreaks even if their clothes or belongings, such as backpacks purses or other bags, contact the leaves. This is because poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac leaf oil can adhere to most objects touching the plants thereby leaving residue for tender skin to touch and become irritated by.

Learning how to determine what causes hives may be possible more often than not, however sufferers, must pay attention to clues in order to pinpoint and thus learn to avoid their triggers.