



Picture: NATASHA PSZENICKI

## THIS IS WHAT 50 LOOKS LIKE

LORENA ÖBERG lives in Surrey with her husband, Stefan. They have two children, William, 13, and Isabella, 16. Lorena runs a skin clinic ([lorenaoberg.co.uk](http://lorenaoberg.co.uk)).

### MY ANTI-AGEING SECRET

AT THE age of 42, I started going through the menopause. It was a really difficult time — until I started taking bio-identical hormones (£150 per month). They come in a bespoke cream form, which you apply daily. It's made such a difference to my energy, libido and skin elasticity. I feel like I'm ageing backwards!

### PERMANENTLY MADE-UP

I DON'T wear much make-up because I have sensitive skin. Instead, I get my eyebrows, eyeliner and lips tattooed on, to avoid allergic reactions. It's expensive, costing £400 each ([mv-aesthetics.co.uk](http://mv-aesthetics.co.uk)), but lasts a year and adds definition. Plus, it speeds up my morning routine: I can be ready in 15 minutes, as I only need concealer.

### DON'T NEGLECT YOUR HANDS

OUR hands can be a real giveaway of age. Every three weeks, I get a bright orange manicure to set off my tan. I have mesotherapy every 18 months, too: anti-ageing ingredients — which you'd usually find in a cream — are injected to improve skin quality. I then have laser treatments every three to six months to blitz age spots (both from £250).

### KEEP LONG HAIR IN SHAPE

I'VE never understood the pressure women face to cut their hair short in mid-life. My long hair is part of my identity: I wouldn't feel 'me' without it. It grows very fast, however, so the downside is that my dye grows out quickly, too. I top up my colour every three weeks and get a trim every six.

### CARRY ON CLUBBING

MY GOAL isn't to look 20, but to be the best I can be at 50. We're lucky to have access to many more cosmetic treatments than our mothers did, but it's ultimately our attitude that keeps us young. I've always loved dancing and meeting new people — so why stop partying now? I still go out clubbing every few weeks with my friends.

Interview: FLORENCE SCORDOULIS

■ DO YOU look good for your age? Reveal your secrets to: [inspire@dailymail.co.uk](mailto:inspire@dailymail.co.uk)

# It's the new double whammy of pollen and pollution. Here's how to stop your summer being ruined by ...

# POLLENUTION

by Claire Coleman

WHILE some of us revel in these warm, late-spring days, for others they're misery. After all, it's no fun dining al fresco when your eyes are puffy, your nose is streaming and your throat itchy.

Yes, we're at the peak of the tree pollen season — but this isn't just about hayfever. For millions, the problem of pollen in the air is compounded by pollution, leading to 'pollenution', a wretched combination that's exacerbating symptoms.

Earlier this month, the World Health Organisation found that a shocking 30 towns and cities in the UK had levels of fine-particle air pollution above the recommended limit of ten micrograms per cubic metre, while a further 17 are at that limit.

This includes Royal Leamington Spa in Warwickshire and Sandy in Bedfordshire, as well as more obvious spots such as London, Manchester and Nottingham — meaning hayfever sufferers in these areas face a double whammy of pollen and pollution.

Add in hot sun and that's a real problem. 'When pollen interacts with pollutants, such as diesel particulates, and ozone, generated in high volumes in hot and sunny weather, it seems to make the proteins in it more potent, so you need fewer to cause a reaction,' says Beverley Adams-Groom, of the University of Worcester's National Pollen and Aerobiology Research Unit. 'Pollution can make pollen grains more fragile, too, causing them to burst and increasing the amount of allergen in the air.'

So, what can you do? Beverley suggests staying indoors with the windows closed and wiping surfaces with a damp cloth to remove pollen.

Andrew Williams, an advanced nurse practitioner specialising in allergies, recommends balms that form a barrier to stop pollen getting in the nose, or daily antihistamines, as they build up to become more effective. If these don't work, ask your GP for a prescription nasal spray or a referral to a specialist clinic.

Alternatively, you could look to the High Street for gadgets that claim to filter the air of pollutants. What works best? With the help of our experts, we assessed what's out there...

### FRESHER AIR

Philips Air Purifier Series 2000i (pictured above, £400, [philips.co.uk](http://philips.co.uk))

THEY SAY: Did you know that the air in your home can have two to five times more allergens and pollutants than outdoors?

Philips air purifiers claim to capture and remove from the

air 99.97 per cent of all allergens. That includes pollen, dust mites, mould spores, pet dander, smoke, bacteria or viruses as small as 0.3 microns (the average cross-section of a human hair is 50 microns, while pollen ranges in size from ten to 1,000 microns).

A series of filters trap indoor air contaminants, while an extra-sensitive 'allergen mode' detects even the slightest change in levels and automatically boosts air flow to reduce them, making sure you're always breathing cleaner air.

OUR EXPERTS SAY: 'I always recommend hayfever sufferers drive with the windows shut and air conditioning on, as most cars have a pollen filter,' says Beverley Adams-Groom. 'In theory, the idea of filtering air is a good one — purifiers such as this can help to filter out pollen and spores.'

However, because rooms aren't confined spaces like cars, it's possible an air purifier will only work on a very local level. But some will find them useful.

### DAMPEN DOWN

Dyson Humidifier AM10 (£499.99, [dyson.co.uk](http://dyson.co.uk))

THEY SAY: When air lacks humidity, it can leave your skin cracked and sinuses dried out.

What's more, it can reduce your respiratory system's natural defences against asthma and other



Picture: GETTY / PICTURE PRESS RM

by the University of Worcester's National Pollen and Aerobiology Research Unit showed that, on average, HayMax prevented 37 per cent of grass pollen from getting into the nose,' says Andrew.

'That's actually better than antihistamines, and safe for anyone to use.'

### GIVE IT THE ELBOW

Qu-Chi Hayfever band (£12.99, [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk))

THEY SAY: Acupuncture pressure points have been used for thousands of years and are increasingly being used by Western doctors.

This band has been designed to apply pressure to the LI-11 acupressure point on the elbow, which acupuncturists believe pulls energy away from the head, nose, face and throat.

You can wear this at night to clear your throat and nose.

OUR EXPERTS SAY: 'There is no evidence that this works clinically,' says Andrew.

'It's likely that any benefit experienced is a placebo effect, but that can be very powerful.'

'Two decades ago, when we were doing clinical trials testing the effects of injections of immunotherapy drugs against salt water, lots of people genuinely found their symptoms improved after being injected with the salt water alone, even though, physiologically, it would have no impact on the body.'

### BOOST IMMUNITY

Immunotherapy (desensitisation) treatments (£100 per month for five to six months a year, for up to three years, from specialist NHS allergy centres and via private providers such as [bmihealthcare.co.uk](http://bmihealthcare.co.uk))

THEY SAY: Allergen immunotherapy (sometimes called desensitisation treatment) involves giving increasing doses of an allergen such as grass pollen by injection or by tablets placed under the tongue.

Unlike drug treatment, which only suppresses symptoms, immunotherapy treatment works by re-programming the immune system, to prevent allergy symptoms from developing in the first place.

OUR EXPERTS SAY: 'There's a lot of good research behind this,' says Andrew.

'The idea is that it works in a similar way to a vaccine, where you gradually build up exposure to the allergen. It works very well for the majority of people, but it's not a quick fix and is something people have to commit to long-term.'

allergy triggers. The Dyson humidifier uses UVC light to kill 99.9 per cent of bacteria in its tank of water, before emitting a fine 'high-velocity' mist, while sensors precisely monitor the temperature and humidity so that a comfortable, hygienic environment is maintained.

OUR EXPERTS SAY: 'Lubricating the nasal passages will probably help people feel better,' says Andrew Williams. 'I think even if I didn't have hayfever, this would make me feel better — but you will probably need something additional as well.'

'Rainfall does help keep down pollen levels, but I don't think there's any evidence high levels of humidity can "dampen down" pollen levels in the same way.'

### BEESWAX BARRIER

HayMax allergy barrier balm (£6.99, [hollandandbarrett.com](http://hollandandbarrett.com))

THEY SAY: HayMax is a natural, organic, drug-free balm made from a blend of beeswax and seed oils. It is applied to the rim of the nostrils and can be used on the bones around the eye socket.

It has been proven to reduce dust and pet allergens and prevent more than a third of pollen from entering the body. Less allergen, less reaction.

It's also suitable for use by children and pregnant and breastfeeding women.

OUR EXPERTS SAY: 'A scientific study carried out on HayMax

