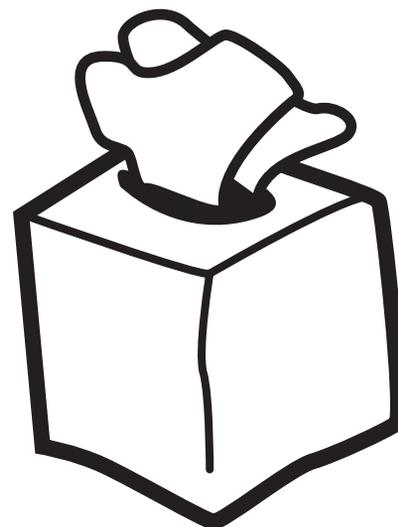


YOUR SINUS SURVIVAL GUIDE

By Monica Montag, MA, HHP, CN



Do any of these symptoms sound like you or a family member?

- ★ Always stuffy?
- ★ Throat perpetually scratchy, froggy, or thick?
- ★ Head pounding from sinus headache or infection?
- ★ Multiple trips to the doctor each winter?

If you said yes to any of the above, then this Sinus Survival Guide is for you!

First, how do sinus infections begin?

The mucous in your sinus passages thickens and forms plugs... and congestion. Bacteria love this moist, dark passageway filled with a nice thick substrate and whammo, you have an infection.

Often, especially if the infections are recurrent, you actually have yeast/fungus embedded in the mucous membranes rather than bacteria, and antibiotics won't work.

I'll bet you, or a family member, have had the experience of taking antibiotics for a sinus infection with no results. These fungal overgrowths are the most stubborn to treat and eliminate.

Some of the common factors that set the stage for sinus infections are:

- [1] Dry heat
- [2] Frigid outdoor temperatures
- [3] Chronic dehydration
- [4] Eating foods that produce a lot of mucus

Here are some **easy home care tips for your sinuses:**

- [1] Use a humidifier in your bedroom
- [2] Drink plenty of clear liquids in the form of water, hot water with lemon, and herbal teas. *(Here's a good hydration formula: Aim for ½ your body weight in ounces daily, so if you weigh 150 pounds, you need 75 oz. of fluid each day).*

- [3] Limit dehydrating drinks such as caffeine and alcohol.

- [4] Eat less of these mucus producing foods:

Dairy
Wheat
Bananas
Sugar
Peanuts
High fat foods

- [5] Eat more mucus thinning or drying foods:

Lemons, limes and fruit
Parsley, celery, cucumbers, onions, garlic
Cinnamon
Sauerkraut, other fermented foods
Mustard, horseradish

NATURAL SUPPLEMENTS THAT PREVENT AND HEAL SINUS INFECTIONS:

These are the top six that I have found effective in years of working with clients with chronic sinus infections. There are of course, many more.

Oil of Oregano capsules: Kills bacteria, fungi and even viruses and are the perfect respiratory tonic all winter. Always use with a probiotic every evening. The probiotics will also improve your immunity.

Garlic: Kills fungus, yeast and mold. If your infection is usually fungal, garlic plus oregano will be most effective.

Echinacea: The best-known immune booster for a sinus infection. This botanical boosts white blood cell production and it also causes the walls of bacteria to erode, so they can't replicate.

Zinc: The body's number one wound healer, needed to repair the mucus membranes that are ravaged by bacteria and fungi. Also boosts immunity; especially helpful for throats made sore from sinus drainage. Just crush a tablet and gargle for direct tissue repair in your throat.

Vita C: Another top immune vitamin, Vita C, is the best studied and understood of them all. It kills bad bugs and repairs damaged tissues. If you are fighting sinus problems maintain a high intake, between 2000-5000 mg/day as tolerated. If you develop diarrhea, reduce the dose.

NAC (n-acetyl-cysteine): A powerful anti-oxidant, liver protector, and mucus thinner. Use it all winter long as needed. I suggest 1000 mg twice/day, or more if needed.

Aromatherapy for the Sinuses

Certain essential oils help kill bacteria, fungi and break up mucus. The oils that I have found to be most helpful are:

- **Thieves** (a Young Living product), this combination kills the bad bugs using cloves, lemon, cinnamon, eucalyptus and rosemary.

- **Myrtle**, breaks up congestion.

These two make a fantastic combination for any bacterial/ fungal congestion.

HOW TO USE THESE OILS:

Inhale steam that has 1-2 drops of both Thieves and Myrtle in the water or you can use Celestial Seasonings brand Breathe Easy Tea.

Alternate hot and cold, wet towels on face, using these essential oils in the water used to soak the towels (Do this for 15 minutes, three to four times daily). This is very soothing and a favorite of our clients.

Hydrotherapy for Healthy Sinus Care

You can also hydrate and sterilize the sinuses using a saline irrigation such as a Neti Pot or a Sinus Rinse Kit. The Neti Pot, originally from Ayurvedic medicine, is a ceramic or plastic pot that looks like a cross between a small teapot and Aladdin's magic lamp. Research has shown

that Neti Pots are effective when used to alleviate congestion, facial pain and pressure.

HALOTHERAPY

Another wonderful way to ease sinus problems is to have a session at a salt cave. Of course, you have to be fortunate enough to live near one, which we are, here in State College!

As you inhale the 84+ minerals contained in the cave, made of Himalayan Sea Salt, your sinuses feel refreshed and cleansed. The salt is anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-viral, and anti-fungal. It is also a very peaceful, relaxing experience. No Salt Cave nearby? You can take the Salt Cave home with you by purchasing a salt lamp. They're beautiful and they infuse the air with the minerals and negative ions, which purify the air.

Indoor Air Quality

Cleaning up your indoor air will greatly support your sinus health. Try these ideas:

Stop smoking.

Reduce air pollutants/allergens.

Use non-toxic cleaning products and avoid air fresheners.

Equip your home with HEPA air filters to remove dust/debris.

Get an air purifier or ionizer to kill mold spores. Combo filter/purifier units are available. Ionizers must be set properly to avoid producing ozone indoors.

Place a plant in each room- they are great air cleaners.

LYMPHATIC FLUSH SELF MASSAGE for sinus health

A bit of self massage only takes a few minutes and is very effective for both preventing and relieving an infection.

Simply repeat these two steps for the Lymphatic Flush. Do it a few times a day, for six strokes each time:

[1] Stroke lightly from behind the ears to behind your collarbone, using short strokes.

[2] Dig your fingertips behind the collarbone and "pump" three to four times.

[3] Stroke again in a diagonal fashion from behind the ear to behind the collarbone.

[4] Then repeat the pumping action. This action will "milk" the lymph glands and allow them to drain into the chest cavity. Sometimes chronic tension in the neck and shoulders prevents the head from draining.

The mucous that is trapped then causes congestion. This simple technique clears the head. Pick a tip and decide to implement it today, especially if you tend to have sinus issues. Prevention is easier than curing an active infection.

Or, if you're feeling ambitious, pick one from each category and take the holistic approach to sinus health! ❖

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