

## Sinusitis: Complementary/Alternative Medicine

History of acute viral respiratory infection, dental infection, or nasal allergy

Nasal congestion and thick discharge

Fever, chills, and frontal headache

Pain, tenderness, redness, and swelling over the involved sinus

Chronic infection may produce no symptoms other than mild postnasal discharge, a musty odor, or a nonproductive cough

### QUICK REVIEW

- Any factor that causes swelling of the mucous membranes that line the sinuses may result in obstruction of drainage and subsequent infection.
- Antibiotic therapy is of limited value.
- Addressing the underlying cause of chronic sinusitis, along with supportive therapy, appears to be the most rational approach.
- Patients with acute sinusitis have responded to bromelain therapy,

### TREATMENT SUMMARY

In cases of acute sinusitis, the therapeutic goals are to reestablish drainage and to clear the acute infection. Various measures can be used: local application of heat, local use of volatile oils and botanicals with antibacterial properties, and immune system support (see IMMUNE SUPPORT).

Since chronic sinusitis is often associated with allergy, long-term control is dependent on isolation and elimination of the food or air-borne allergens and correction of the underlying problem that allowed the allergy to develop (see FOOD ALLERGY for a more thorough discussion). During the acute phase, elimination of the common food allergens (milk, wheat, eggs, citrus, corn, and peanut butter) is recommended until a more definitive diagnosis can be made.

Local applications of heat have been shown to be very effective in alleviating both short- and long-term symptoms of allergic rhinitis. The sinuses can also easily be irrigated to flush the secretions loaded with histamine and allergens from them. The Nasaline nasal rinsing system is available @ NutritionWise 75 Indiantown Rd in Jupiter (561) 747-1818. Netti pot is a system that Oprah recommended the most. NutritionWise sells Nasaline salt packets for both systems. We have found that patients with chronic sinusitis often suffer from yeast syndrome (chronic Candidiasis). Take the self-test in CANDIASIS to determine whether this situation applies.

### Nutritional Supplements

(see IMMUNE SUPPORT for more information)

- Vitamin C: 500 mg every two hours • Bioflavonoids: 1,000 mg per day
- Vitamin A: 5,000 IU per day
- Beta-carotene: 25,000 IU per day • Zinc: 20-30 mg per day
- Thymus extract: the equivalent of 120 mg pure polypeptides with molecular weights less than 10,000, or roughly 500 mg of the crude polypeptide fraction

### Botanical Medicines

(all dosages three times per day) • *Echinacea sp.*

Dried root (or as tea): 0.5-1 g Freeze-dried plant: 325-650 mg juice of aerial portion of *E. purpurea* stabilized in 22% ethanol: 2-3 ml

Tincture (1:5): 2--4 ml

Fluid extract (1:1): 2-4 ml

Solid (dry powdered) extract (6.5:1 or 3.5% echinacoside): 150-300 mg

*Hydrastis canadensis* (goldenseal) The dosage should be based on berberine content. As there is a wide range of quality in goldenseal

preparations, standardized extracts are recommended. Three times a day dosages follow:

Dried root or as infusion (tea): 2--4 g

Tincture (1:5): 6-12 ml (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-3 tsp) Fluid extract (1:1): 2-4 ml (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-1 tsp) Solid (powdered dry) extract (4:1 or 8-12% alkaloid content): 250-500 mg

- Bromelain (1,200-1,800 mcu): 250-500 mg between meals

#### Topical Treatment

- Intranasal douche with saline solution (available at pharmacies)
- Swab passages with oil of bitter orange Menthol or eucalyptus packs over sinuses (take care to avoid irritation)

#### Physical Therapy

- Local applications of hot packs (discontinue if pain increases without drainage)