

ALLERGY & SINUS

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GET TO THE REAL CAUSE OF ALLERGIES AND SINUS INFECTIONS. **FIND LASTING RELIEF** WITH A COMBINATION OF THERAPIES, INCLUDING HERBS, SUPPLEMENTS, AND HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES. BY ISAAC ELIAZ, MD, LAC

CHRONIC SINUSITIS is a common health condition that affects 14 out of every 100 people in the United States. While these problems may not seem serious, they can be an expression of imbalances within the immune or digestive systems. In addition to the typical sneezing and runny nose, sinus infections may cause headaches, abdominal pain, and even menstrual problems. Because there is only a thin plate of bone between the sinuses and brain, sinus infections can cause mental fogginess and a lack of concentration.

COPIOUS CAUSES

Acute sinusitis, most often caused by allergies or the common cold, can progress to chronic sinusitis, which involves abnormal production of sinus fluid and swollen, inflamed nasal passages. This transition to chronic sinusitis can result from certain physiological, anatomical, and environmental factors; immune system imbalances; infectious agents, such as bacteria, fungus, or other pathogens; and allergies.

It may seem like a stretch to link allergies with digestion, but they're actually quite interconnected. In fact, a common source of allergies is inflammation of the respiratory and gastrointestinal tracts. When inflammation occurs, large molecules can enter the circulation. The immune system then launches an attack. The result is an allergic reaction that initiates an inflammatory process, ultimately affecting the sinuses.

Two well-known dietary contributors to sinus congestion are dairy products and gluten. Avoiding these two food groups often leads to improvement in sinus problems.

Poor indoor air quality also plays a large role in aggravating the cycle of chronic sinusitis. Research has shown that reducing fungal air concentrations using a high-efficiency particulate air filtration system (HEPA) helps restore the sinus mucosa to a normal state. You can also lower your exposure to other allergens, such as dust mites and animal dander, by removing carpeting and feather bedding from the environment and using pillow and mattress covers that are mite proof.

NATURAL TREATMENTS FOR CHRONIC SINUSITIS

Chronic sinusitis is most effectively addressed using safe and natural remedies—antibiotics only provide temporary, partial relief. The holistic treatment of chronic sinusitis requires a multifaceted approach that addresses allergies, the digestive system, dental health, immune support, circulation, and drainage. Key components of this approach include manual therapies, detoxification, acupuncture, diet, herbs, supplements, and homeopathic remedies—all of which offer long-term support, not just for sinuses, but for your overall health as well. Some particularly effective therapies include:

- **Infrared Sauna:** An infrared sauna gives off therapeutic heat that can be absorbed by the body, promoting circulation in the sinuses.
- **Neti Pot:** Irrigating the sinuses with a traditional Ayurvedic Neti pot helps promote drainage. A 2.5–5-percent salt solution may be used or 1–2 drops of tea tree oil may be added to the water. Another option is to add powdered extracts of goldenseal, barberry, or Oregon grape root. These herbs contain berberine, a plant alkaloid with antibacterial, antifungal and anti-inflammatory properties. For complete instructions on safe use of a Neti pot, visit himalayaninstitute.org.
- **Neural Therapy:** For more severe sinus conditions, neural therapy—which involves injecting the tonsils and sinuses with homeopathic remedies and an anesthetic—can be effective. To find a practitioner, try the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (naturopathic.org).
- **Cranial-Sacral Therapy:** Cranial-sacral therapy can help improve sinus conditions by creating more space between the cranial bones, promoting normal drainage, and relieving sinus pressure. Visit the Web site craniosacraltherapy.org to learn more.

SUPPLEMENTS AND HERBS

A variety of natural herbs and supplements can be useful in reducing allergic reactions, decreasing inflammation, boosting immunity, and helping thin and expel mucus.

- **Padma Basic** is a highly-researched Tibetan herbal formula that has been shown to fight sinusitis by regulating inflammation and enhancing the immune response.

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SINUS & ALLERGY SURVIVAL KIT

Each of the products below contain either one or a combination of the nutrients covered in the article.



EcoNugenics Padma Basic

This proprietary blend of Tibetan herbs has been clinically tested and helps strengthen immunity, as well as promote cardiovascular health.



Himalayan Institute Neti Wash Plus

Designed as a Daily Neti Pot Boost, this liquid contains antibacterial herbs, including goldenseal and bayberry, and sinus-soothing xylitol.



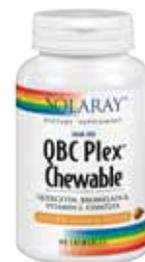
New Chapter Organics Lifeshield Breathe

Formulated with reishi, cordyceps, and a few other mushrooms, this respiratory formula can be taken any time, even on an empty stomach.



Ron Teeguarden's Dragon Herbs Magnolia Sinus

Developed by a leading Chinese herbalist, this product combines magnolia flower with other Chinese herbs for sinus and immune health.



Solaray QBC Plex Chewable

This supplement is popular because, as online reviewers attest, it works. It contains quercetin, bromelain, and vitamin C. Also available in capsules.

- **Medicinal mushrooms**, particularly reishi and cordyceps, support immunity, digestion, and circulation while also reducing inflammation.
- **Vitamin C** has antihistamine, anti-inflammatory, and immune-boosting properties at doses of from 500–1,000 mg taken three times daily.

- **Quercetin** and **hesperidin** are two powerful plant flavonoids that can both inhibit inflammation-producing enzymes and reduce the release of histamine from immune cells. Take 500 mg of each, one to three times daily.
- **Bromelain**, an enzyme found in pineapple, has anti-inflammatory

properties. It also helps thin and expel mucus. Clinical trials have shown that bromelain helps reduce inflammation of the nasal mucosa in acute sinusitis patients. Bromelain needs to be taken on an empty stomach, 250–500 mg one to three times daily.

- **Zinc** is necessary for optimal immune function; a deficiency can increase inflammation. Take 25–50 mg daily.
- **Jin Yin Hua** and **Lian Qiao** are two Chinese herbal combinations that can reduce inflammation and increase immune response.
- **Honokiol**, a compound extracted from *Magnolia officinalis* bark, offers powerful anti-inflammatory and immune support, along with significant additional health benefits.

take the test

It's actually very easy to determine if you are suffering from an ongoing hidden sinus infection by performing a simple screening test: Gently press your three middle fingers into your maxillary sinuses (just under the bone under your eyes) or frontal sinuses (in your forehead) and see if you feel pressure. If you do, keep applying the same pressure and wait. If the pressure increases over time, you may have chronic sinusitis.



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