

## Sinus Survival

Sinus congestion is one of the most prevalent disorders in America, and according to the National Center for Health Statistics, affects about 40 million people each year. This makes it the most common chronic condition in the United States. I see cases of sinus congestion everyday in my practice as well as my family life, and it is one difficult problem to fix. Thankfully, the new book Sinus Survival, by Robert S. Ivker, sheds some light on the disorder and offers practical solutions on how to overcome sinusitis. Sinusitis is defined as inflammation of the mucosal membranes of the sinus cavities. This inflammation can be caused by a variety of reasons, making sinusitis such a difficult condition to treat. Common causes include: Bacterial infection, food allergy, air pollution (indoor and outdoor), cigarettes and other sources of smoke, dry air, cold air, fumes, occupational hazards, dental problems, immunodeficiency, malformations and emotional stress. Also, it is now recognized that yeast and fungal infections can inflame the mucus membranes of the sinuses. In order for a treatment plan to be effective, it has to recognize and address all of the potential irritants that can cause sinusitis, and have a plan of action against them.

Most are familiar with the hallmark sign of sinusitis cause by bacterial infection. Slimy green discharge from the nose. The common medical treatment for bacterial infection is antibiotic therapy, however this treatment is riddled with side effects. Some people are severely allergic to antibiotics, and in recent studies, the likely hood of recurrent infections after antibiotic therapy is increased. This may be due to the disruptions of the good bacterial living within the gastrointestinal tract as a result of antibiotic therapy. This imbalance of the gastrointestinal flora can lead to increased immuodeficiency and infection. A natural alternative to antibiotic therapy would be to increase the amount of garlic in your diet. Garlic is a natural antibiotic as well as an anti-fungal and anti-viral. It is recommended to ingest at least 1,200 mg 3x/day when treating a sinus infection. Echinacea is also recommended to stimulate the immune system at the dosage of about 200 mcg 3x/day. Natural anti-inflammatories like Omega 3 fatty acids, Boswellia, Ginger, Turmeric, and Cayenne are helpful in reducing the swelling of the nasal passageways. Finally, when treating a bacterial sinus infection, you must pay attention to the gastrointestinal tract and re-colonize your gut with probiotics like lactobacillus acidophilus and bifidobacteria. This will not only bolster gut immunity; it will fight of any other pathogenic microorganisms such as yeast, fungus and parasites. The author notes that infections from these other pathogens are a primary cause of sinus infections especially Candida Albicans. If you suspect yeast-related sinusitis, medical antibiotic therapy can actually make your problem worse. Contact a wholistic practitioner who is willing to prescribe specific test such as a comprehensive digestive stool analysis or a Candida Antibody test. This will help rule out the difference between a bacterial and yeast-related infection and assist in outlining the proper treatment.

Food related allergies are another major cause of inflammation in the sinuses and rest of the body. Make sure you are eating foods that are compatible with your blood type, and as a general rule, try to avoid dairy products, shellfish and sugar. These foods contribute to mucous production and swelling, two things you definitely don't need if you are fighting a sinus infection. A Multivitamin and/or phytonutrient complex will provide the nutritional backbone for all the necessary vitamins, minerals, and enzymes necessary

for complete health. Hot fluids such as Mom's chicken soup, hot tea with lemon, and peppermint tea is also helpful in helping to break up sinus congestion.

If your problem is due to indoor pollution such as plastics, perfumes, smoke, ECT, then you might want to try an air purification devise with a negative ion generator. In a recent Harvard study, it was determined that negative ion generators are highly effective in reducing the amount of potential irritants in the air. It is also beneficial to clean air ducts and carpets, and improve ventilation and plants in the home. Room humidifiers are useful especially on cold, dry days. A steam inhaler or saline solution wash are also helpful in keeping the mucous membranes moist and healthy. Of course, drinking as much water as possible will help the body flush out all potential toxins and restore a normal balance to the body.

The most overlooked cause of sinusitis is emotional distress in the form of anger. The field of Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) dictates that our thoughts and emotions have a direct effect on the way our bodies immune system works, and negative thoughts like anger, fear and hate have devastating effects on our own immune system. Specific therapeutic modalities such as psychotherapy, meditation, autosuggestion, and visual guided imagery are all great tools in helping to gain control of your emotions. Techniques that are also great emotional releases are screaming, writing and angry letter (But not sending It.), punching and vigorous exercise.

Sinus congestion is so difficult to treat because so many different things cause it. By employing a comprehensive treatment approach, you will maximize your chances of overcoming this dreaded malady.

Dr. Bernhard J. Sengstock is a licensed Chiropractor in the State of New York with 300 hours of post-doctorate training in the field of rehabilitation. Clinical nutrition is a large part of his practice located at Universal Health & Rehabilitation, 152 Islip Ave., Suite 23, Islip, New York 11751. For a Phone consultation or to set up an appointment, please call (631) 277-6767.

12/7/00-FREE LECTURE- Detoxification- Presented by Dr. Bernhard J. Sengstock of Universal Health & Rehabilitation. Lecture location- Central Islip Public Library @ 7:30pm. Please call (631) 277-6767 for more information and/or to reserve your seat.