

# Chronic or Recurrent Sinusitis

Acute sinusitis is common. It is mostly treated with antibiotics combined with inhalations, saline douches or decongestants.

However some people get recurrent bouts of sinusitis or it becomes chronic. This can be difficult to treat. There are several different reasons why this happens, including allergy, bacterial and fungal infection. Often it is treated with multiple courses of antibiotic which itself can lead to a downward spiral in health.

The commonest allergy is to milk and a typical symptom is catarrh. However other foods including wheat and yeast can cause problems too. Usually an exclusion diet in which these foods are removed from the diet for a week or two then re-introduced will provide an answer (see food intolerance leaflet).

However remember sugar. It is food for both bacteria and fungi. The number of microbes can double within 20 minutes after an intake of sugar.

Fungal infections can cause sinusitis. This is more likely after several courses of antibiotics because this allows them to multiply. Another reason is if there is a source of fungus in the house. A clue to this is mould forming in damp areas. These moulds can release mycotoxins which can give rise to a wide variety of health effects.

However bacteria such as MAR-CoNS and moulds can both cause chronic rhinosinusitis (inflammation of the nose and sinus) and the bacteria can hide behind "biofilms" making them difficult to treat with antibiotics.

A useful product is Xlear. This contains saline which is antibacterial, xylitol which stops the salt drying the nose out and leaves a film which protects it from microbes and grape-see extract which is anti-bacterial and anti-fungal. It is available from health food shops and on-line. In difficult cases once infection has settled, nasal probiotics can be used as a protective. These are available but not easy to find.

Another useful remedy is iodine because of its strong antibacterial antiviral and antifungal properties. It is volatile and quickly reaches the respiratory passages and kills microbes. A good way to get this into the sinuses is inhalation with a salt pipe. Put about 4 drops of 12% or 15%

Lugol's iodine in the salt pipe (see youtube on Protect yourself from Covid 19 blog or COPD leaflet). Alternatively inhale from a small bowl of boiled water with the iodine in it and put a towel over the head but here the effect will be less strong. Use at least four times daily.

One other product which can prove useful is **MSM (methylsulphonylmethane)**. Add a level teaspoonful of MSM crystals to about 30mls of warm water. The crystals should dissolve. Then use a dropper to put a few drops into each nostril about four times a day. The sinus congestion will normally settle within 2 weeks. Alternatively you could put the same solution in a spray bottle and spray into each nostril four times a day.

With any chronic infection, keep sugar and carbohydrates low. Fat and protein are OK. Fasting often helps as it promotes immunity (at least try to have 12 hours between the evening meal and breakfast with no food). Use Vitamin C to bowel tolerance (see separate leaflet) for acute episodes starting as soon as the sinusitis flares up.