



## A WELLSPRING OF NATURAL HEALTH, INC.

*Person-Centered Health Care • Natural Medicine for the Whole Family*

### Your Sinuses and You

The sinuses are a magnificent structure of tunnels and caves running throughout your head that are a part of your respiratory system. Their location and special environment makes them especially vulnerable to stubborn infections, both acute and recurrent or chronic. Antibiotics are often inappropriate and ineffective. Most sinus infections are not caused by bacteria but involve opportunistic viral and fungal organisms. Even when bacteria are present, oral antibiotics may provide only limited effectiveness because they have a difficult time getting into the affected areas. In any case, changing the environment in your sinuses is critical to successfully ending sinus congestion, inflammation and pressure. Furthermore, sinus infections often become the site of what is called a "focal infection". This is a chronic, debilitating condition in which an acute infection lingers for an extended period because it is able to evade detection and attack by your immune system. Such an infection can become lodged in one part of your body and expands or retreats depending on your diet, fatigue, stress and other resistance factors. In this way, a stubborn, low-grade sinus infection can become a source of irritation for the whole body, inflaming connective tissues such as tendons and ligaments, as well as depleting your immune system.

Consequently, not only do your sinuses keep dripping and feel swollen, other types of inflammatory processes such as bladder irritation, digestive dysfunction and menstrual discomfort can appear and be hard to completely resolve. The treatment of this condition has two major parts. One of these is the care we give you in the way of acupuncture and herbs. The other major part is your home care — the care you give yourself!

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#### HOME CARE

The care revolves around irrigating your sinuses. This acts to dislodge the infection and strengthen the area. The most common way to do this is to use salt water.

##### Salt water wash

Start with **¼ teaspoon of salt** (sea salt or any salt without additives is best; check the label, most salt is diluted with sugar and/or preservatives).

Mix it with **¼ cup of warm water**. If this is too irritating, you may add a pinch of baking soda into the mix. To increase the potency of your solution you may add some Goldenseal tea or a few drops of a non-alcoholic Goldenseal preparation. Using a dropper, a spoon or your palm, draw up the warm salt water solution, tip your head back and pull a few drops (or more) of the solution into one nostril. **Draw the water back and spit it out your mouth into the basin.** Then do the same on the other side.

After completing this process, you may use a small amount of plain warm water to rinse; drawing it back and spitting it out as above. Over time you may find it beneficial to increase the volume of your solution. A neti pot can also be a valuable tool in making the sinus wash a healthy habit in your daily routine.

**Do this twice a day.** Make the solution fresh every day or even fresh each time you use it so that the solution will be Warm. Each day increase the amount of water you use by one or two drops until you are using a whole dropper full. When you reach this point it will be time to go on to the next phase of your home care. Let us know when you have reached this point and we will let you know what to do next.

If you have any questions, please be sure to give us a call. And be sure to let us know how you are doing at your next appointment.