

Title: Chronic Sinusitis: A Guide to Therapy

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Abstract: Nasal irrigations performed with a large volume and delivered with low positive pressure are more effective than saline sprays.

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Chronic Sinusitis: A Guide to Therapy

What is chronic sinusitis?

Chronic sinusitis, or rhinosinusitis, is an infection of one or more of the 4 sinus cavities for at least 3 months duration. It is among one of the most common chronic diseases afflicting Americans of all ages. Usually, it arises after small openings that drain the sinuses become clogged. This may occur from anatomic factors, such as a deviated septum, or from mucosal inflammation. Several conditions may cause such inflammation, including allergic, non-allergic, and viral rhinitis. Once drainage from the sinuses is impeded, mucous collects in the sinus cavity and provides a rich environment for bacteria to grow. This leads to acute sinusitis, and if left untreated, may evolve into chronic sinusitis.



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Symptoms

- Nasal stuffiness
- Nasal discharge
- Postnasal drip
- Facial fullness, discomfort
- Headache
- Chronic cough
- Sore throat
- Bad breath
- Poor sleep

What is the treatment?

Both medical and surgical treatments exist for chronic sinusitis. Medical management is aimed at controlling predisposing factors, treating infections, reducing inflammation of the sinus tissues, and facilitating the drainage of sinus secretions. Patients often require multiple modes of treatment to get control of their symptoms. Surgery is reserved for patients that find no relief from medical therapy.

Specific Therapies

- Antibiotics for infection
- Nasal steroids for inflammation
- Antihistamines for allergies
- Decongestants
- Mucolytics to promote mucous drainage
- Saline nasal irrigation to promote natural mucous clearance
- Steam inhalation

Recent evidence has shown that nasal irrigation with low positive pressure significantly improves the quality of life for sufferers of chronic sinusitis. Visit the website below to watch a video prepared by the Mayo Clinic, which illustrates the equipment you will need and demonstrates how to irrigate your sinuses.

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/nasal-lavage/MM00552>