



# Breathe Freely Again

## Relieving Sniffing, Sneezing, and Runny Nose the Natural Way

In the bones surrounding our eyes and nose are cavities called sinuses. These cavities make our skull lighter and they also serve as resonance chambers for our voice. Surrounded by mucus membranes, the sinuses can sometimes become irritated or infected, resulting in inflammation or sinusitis. Chronic sinus congestion or inflammation usually points to a chronic problem in the lymphatic and immune systems.

In Chinese medicine, the lungs and the colon are the organs corresponding to the Metal element, which is responsible for the functioning of the “wei qi” or defensive energy which protects the body from external invasion. In Western terminology, we would call this energy, “immunity.” The connection between the colon and the lungs appears to be the lymphatic system, which under ordinary circumstances, removes waste from the tissues and drains it into the colon in the form of mucus. When the colon is congested, this results in a greater toxic burden in the body with less effective lymphatic drainage. As a result, more waste is eliminated from the body via the mucus membranes of the respiratory tract, including the sinuses.

In the short term, this can result in sinus problems such as a runny nose, sneezing, post-nasal drip and coughs. As the problem becomes more chronic, post-nasal drip can inflame the throat causing sore throats, and toxic-laden lymphatic fluid can irritate other tissues causing inflammatory conditions like earaches, tonsillitis, bronchitis and even asthma. The toxic “swamp-like” condition also creates a breeding ground for infection.

Therefore, as odd as it may seem, cleansing the colon is usually the first, and most important, step to easing sinus troubles. In acute situations, an enema will often rapidly ease sinus pressure and congestion. A short fast, or at least abstaining from all heavy foods and flushing the system with water and juices, will also allow the digestive and lymphatic systems to clear themselves and sinus problems to be relieved.

For more chronic problems, a colon cleanse such as the Tiao He Cleanse or even just taking Nature’s Three or Psyllium Hulls Combination with All Cell Detox can work wonders.

Food allergies may also be part of this picture. Chronic sinus problems (and the other conditions related to them) are often caused by dairy or wheat allergies. Dairy is particularly troublesome. Milk is created by mammals by condensing lymphatic fluid into a concentrated substance. Remember that breast tissue is primarily lymphatic tissue. The milk essentially gives an oral “transfusion” of nutrients from the mother’s blood. To put it

more bluntly, milk is practically condensed lymphatic fluid and congests the lymphatics more rapidly than any other food.

So, eliminating dairy products, as well as using milk substitutes like rice milk or soy milk, can be helpful. Avoiding sugar and wheat products may also be helpful.

In addition to these foundational measures, there are many ways to directly work with the sinuses themselves. Pressure or blockage in the sinus cavities is usually a sign of mucus “trapped” in the sinuses resulting in depressed function of the mucus membranes from constant irritation. Because of this, the membranes are no longer able to properly flush the excess mucus.

Herbs with expectorant and decongestant actions can stimulate these tissues and help to break-up trapped mucus and expel it from the system. AL-J is one of the best all-around formulas for sinus problems and chronic sinus congestion. It is good for colds, coughs, sneezing and practically any respiratory problem involving excess mucus production. Another effective formula for breaking up both acute and chronic sinus problems is HCP-X.

Fenugreek & Thyme is a great formula for chronic sinus pressure that has a tendency to cause sinus headaches. Sinus Support is another helpful formula for chronic sinus problems. It helps dry up excessive sinus drainage while working to expel excess phlegm and detoxify the lymphatic fluids. When the sinus problems are also affecting the bronchials causing bronchitis and cough, Bronchial Formula is an excellent choice.

Snuffing a little Bayberry up the sinuses can rapidly shrink nasal polyps and bring relief from constant sinus problems. Colloidal Silver, IN-X and Vitamin A&D are other remedies that can be helpful for sinus problems.

All of these formulas will work better when taken with plenty of water. Mucus is 95% water and it is very important that the mucus membranes be properly hydrated so they can produce a thin, watery secretion to break up the trapped mucus.

There are plenty of excellent natural remedies that can help you to breathe freely again. Talk to your local herb specialist to help you develop a program that is right for you. You can also consult some of the resources below.

### Selected References

*The Comprehensive Guide to Nature’s Sunshine Products* by Steven H. Horne  
*Prescription for Nutritional Healing* by James F. Balch and Phyllis A. Balch  
*The One Spirit Encyclopedia of Complementary Health*, Nikki Bradford, Editor

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