

## Your Monthly Update

*Dear Colleague*

Welcome to the September 2008 newsletter from Pure Bio Ltd.

### Did you know:

**Resveratrol** is not only a potent anti-inflammatory (by inhibiting the COX-2 enzyme), but can also have major impact on cardiovascular function. It is a natural ACE inhibitor, prevents blood clots and reduces LDL cholesterol and triglycerides.

In response to a specific request, the chosen topic for this month is:

## Sinus Congestion / Infection

### Protocol Summary

Ranking	Nutritional Supplements	Botanical Medicine
Primary	Bromelain	
Secondary		Cineole (a component of eucalyptus)
Other	Vitamin C	Eucalyptus Gentian root, primrose flowers, sorrel herb, elder flowers, and European vervain (in combination) Horseradish Wood betony
<p><b>Primary – Reliable and relatively consistent scientific data showing a substantial health benefit.</b></p> <p><b>Secondary – Contradictory, insufficient, or preliminary studies suggesting a health benefit or minimal health benefit.</b></p> <p><b>Other – An herb is primarily supported by traditional use, or the herb or supplement has little scientific support and/or minimal health benefit.</b></p>		

### Symptoms

When the mucous membranes lining the sinus cavities inflame and swell, the headache and stuffiness typical of a sinus infection develop. Depending on which sinus has become infected, the pain will centre on either side of the nose or on the forehead. In some instances, it can mimic a toothache. The pain can either focus at one exact spot, or it can be diffuse, like a mild pressure headache. Bending over or

pressing against the particular bone affected will exacerbate the symptoms. Typically, the nose feels stuffed up and blowing it brings out greenish-yellow mucus. The voice becomes nasal. An acute sinus infection can be quite painful and long-lasting. Fever, fatigue and facial swelling are common in acute infections, but rarely appear in chronic ones. Recurring, chronic infections produce few symptoms, sometimes with only a postnasal drip.

## Sinus Infection Causes

- Sinusitis is most commonly caused by either a viral or bacterial infection; and often follows a head cold which refuses to heal.
- Infection may also be secondary to dental infections, especially if chronic or recurring.
- Allergies can also result in sinus infections.
- Chronic or recurring infections are often due to a prior incompletely healed sinusitis, which precipitates renewed infection.

Sinusitis is difficult to heal because the swelling limits proper air flow. Steam typically helps to open up the passages. Smoking and other irritants increase susceptibility. Swimming is a trigger for some people. Certain foods that increase mucus production, such as milk and milk products, often add to the problem.

## Dietary Modification

Varying studies show that anything from 25–70% of people with sinusitis have environmental allergies. Food allergies may also contribute to the problem: common food allergens are milk, wheat, eggs, citrus fruits, corn and peanut butter. People with sinusitis may benefit by working with a practitioner to evaluate what, if any, effect the elimination of food and other allergens might have on reducing their symptoms.

Food allergy appears to play an important role in many cases of rhinitis, which is related to sinus congestion. In a study of children under one year of age with allergic rhinitis and/or asthma, 91% had a significant improvement in symptoms while following an allergy-elimination diet. In the experience of one group of doctors, food allergy was the most common cause of chronic rhinitis. Two other researchers have found food allergy to be a contributing factor to allergic rhinitis in 25% and 39% of cases, respectively.

### During infection:

- Drink plenty of liquids to aid drainage, and avoid refined sugars.
- Increase intake of yellow fruits and vegetables, since a deficiency of vitamin A can exacerbate sinusitis.
- Consume foods high in vitamin C – broccoli, green leafy vegetables, citrus fruits and blackcurrants.
- Spicy foods and alcohol aggravate sinusitis.
- Radishes clear the sinuses.
- For a sinus headache, hold a clove of garlic in the mouth for fifteen minutes.
- Celery and turnip-green juice or any other green, leafy vegetables are excellent to clear mucus. Take 1 tbsp. three times daily. Add 1 teaspoon of garlic juice for an even stronger effect.

## Lifestyle Modification

The most common cause of nasal congestion is allergy to inhalants, such as pollen, moulds, dust mites, trees, or animal dander. Exposure to various chemicals in the home or workplace may also contribute to allergic rhinitis. Indoor and outdoor air pollution may also be a factor in susceptible people. Smoking and second-hand exposure to tobacco smoke have been implicated in chronic nasal congestion and the prevalence of chronic rhinitis among men has been shown to increase with increasing

cigarette consumption. People exposed to chlorine, such as lifeguards and swimmers, may also be at risk of developing nasal congestion.

Careful evaluation by an allergist or other healthcare professional may help identify factors contributing to nasal congestion. Sometimes strict avoidance of the triggering agents (e.g., thoroughly vacuuming house dust or using dust covers on the mattresses) may provide relief. Where complete avoidance of irritants is not possible, desensitization techniques - immunotherapy (allergy shots) - may be helpful. See [www.healthy-house.co.uk/](http://www.healthy-house.co.uk/) for allergy support in the home.

Nasal irrigation with warm water or saline may be helpful for reducing symptoms of sinus congestion, although steam inhalations appear to be less useful. In a study of people suffering from the common cold, steam inhalation did not improve sinus congestion any better than placebo. In a similar controlled study, irrigation of the nasal passages with heated water or saline, decreased nasal secretions, although inhalation of water vapor did not.

## Other therapies

Surgery may be used to unblock the sinuses and drain thick secretions if drug therapy is not effective, or if there are structural abnormalities.

## Nutritional Supplement Treatment Options

[Bromelain](#) has been reported to relieve symptoms of acute sinusitis. In a double-blind trial, 87% of patients who took bromelain reported good to excellent results compared with 68% of those taking placebo. Other double-blind research has shown that bromelain reduces symptoms of sinusitis.

Histamine is associated with increased nasal and sinus congestion. In one study, [vitamin C](#) supplementation (1,000 mg TID) reduced histamine levels in people with either high histamine levels or low blood levels of vitamin C. Another study found that 2,000 mg of vitamin C helped protect people exposed to a histamine challenge test. Not every study reported reductions in histamine.

[Vitamins A and C](#) are essential during a sinus infection. When vitamin A is deficient, a sinus infection can take hold more easily, as this vitamin protects the mucous membranes from illness. Vitamin C is useful for any infection, since it enhances immune system function and is both antibacterial and antiviral. Bioflavonoids maximize the use and absorption of vitamin C and act similarly.

[Colloidal silver](#) also boosts immunity.

## Botanical Treatment Options

[Eucalyptus oil](#) is often used in a steam inhalation to help clear nasal and sinus congestion. Eucalyptus oil is said to function in a fashion similar to that of menthol by acting on receptors in the nasal mucous membranes, leading to a reduction in the symptoms of nasal stuffiness.

The main ingredient of eucalyptus oil, cineole, has been studied as a treatment for sinusitis. In a double-blind study of people with acute sinusitis that did not require treatment with antibiotics, those given cineole orally at a dose of 200 mg 3 times per day recovered significantly faster than those given a placebo. Eucalyptus oil is also often used in a steam inhalation to help clear nasal and sinus congestion

One of the most popular supportive treatments for both acute and chronic sinusitis in Germany is an herbal combination containing [gentian root](#), [primrose flowers](#), [sorrel herb](#), [elder flowers](#), and [European vervain](#). The combination has been found to be

useful in helping to promote mucus drainage (“mucolytic” action) from the sinuses. The combination is typically used together with antibiotics for treating acute sinusitis.

[Horseradish](#) is another herb used traditionally as a mucous-dissolver. One half to one teaspoon (3–5 grams) of the freshly grated root can be eaten TID. Horseradish tincture is also available. One quarter to one half teaspoon (2 to 3 ml) can be taken TID.

[Wood betony \(Stachys betonica\)](#) is used in traditional European herbal medicine as an anti-inflammatory remedy for people with sinusitis.

The following [cayenne formula](#) is an excellent aid to clearing mucous and relieving pain:

- use 1 tsp. each of cayenne fruit, garlic clove, ginger root, horseradish root, onion and parsley leaf and root. Crush or chop finely. Make an extract by adding 1/2 cup of raw, organic apple cider vinegar and let stand for twenty-four hours. Strain and use 1 tsp. in 1 cup of hot water and drink daily.

[Echinacea](#) is a well-documented immune system enhancer. In acute infections, take 20-40 drops of echinacea tincture in liquid initially, then 10-20 drops every two to three hours for two days. For chronic sinusitis, take 5-10 drops in liquid three times daily for fifteen days; repeat after two-week intervals.

[Ground ivy leaf](#) has mucous-reducing and astringent properties, drying the mucous in the sinus and bronchial area. Take 1/4 tsp. of tincture in water or prepare a tea using 1 tsp. of leaves in 1 cup of boiling water.

[Goldenseal root](#) reduces mucous. Take 1/4 tsp. of tincture in water three times daily.

To promote sinus drainage, take steam inhalations with camomile, Japanese peppermint oil and thyme. Add 2-3 drops of tea tree oil for a stronger effect.

## Integrative Options

A warm salt-water solution poured through the nose may offer some relief from both allergic and infectious sinusitis. A ceramic pot, known as a “neti lota” pot, makes this procedure easy. Alternatively, a small watering pot with a tapered spout may be used. Fill the pot with warm water and add enough salt so the solution tastes like tears. Stand over a sink, tilt your head far to one side so your ear is parallel to the floor, and pour the solution into the upper nostril, allowing it to drain through the lower nostril. Repeat on the other side. This procedure may be performed two or three times a day.

Some practitioners may treat sinus problems using various manipulation techniques.

## Sinus Infection Homeopathy

For acute infections, choose one of the following in a 6c strength, repeating three times daily for several days as necessary. Dissolve 2 tablets under the tongue.

[Kalium bichromium](#) is probably the most common remedy for sinus infections, when the mucous is particularly thick and stringy, and the sinus pain is most pronounced at the nose base or in a small spot in the forehead. Warmth typically brings relief.

[Pulsatilla](#) is helpful for thick, yellow mucous, when the pain is worse in the warm air and better in cooler air. The pain also tends to be worse at night.

[Hepar sulphuris](#) is particularly useful if the sinuses are so sensitive that the least cold draft brings on pain and the face is very sensitive to touch. The person feels chilly and irritable.

[Silicea](#) is used for conditions that come on slowly and resolve slowly. Sinus pain that improves with hard pressure and warmth often require this homeopathic remedy.

## Sinus Infection External/Physical Therapies

- Use steam inhalations to promote sinus drainage.
- Onion poultices are simple and effective. Chop an onion finely, place between two pieces of gauze and bind it on the neck before retiring, leaving it on overnight. For a chronic case or a condition that originated with a cold, apply hot onion compresses to soothe and alleviate the stuffiness.
- Rising-temperature foot and sitz-baths, alternating hot and cold foot baths and calf wraps increase circulation and boost the immune system.
- For a sinus infection with pus, apply poultices of flax seed to sinus area.
- Reflexology
- Work the reflexes of the head, neck, sinuses, chest and lungs and ileocecal valve.

## Sinus Infection Other Suggestions

Sea air is recommended for dry mucus membranes.

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