

CORNERSTONE MEDICAL CLINIC

402 South 12th Avenue Yakima, Washington 98902
Phone (509) 248-3263

TREATMENT OF SINUSITIS

Resistant forms of sinusitis often require decongestion of the nasal surface to allow the sinuses to drain properly. A program that we have used successfully includes the following steps:

- 1) Afrin Nasal Spray (or generic equivalent): 2 sprays in each nostril twice daily for one week, then stop.
- 2) Saline Nasal Irrigation (see separate handout) performed 10 minutes after Afrin. This allows further cleaning of the nose after the Afrin has shrunk the membranes. Continue saline irrigations twice daily for as long as you have symptoms, even after the Afrin is stopped.
- 3) _____ Nasal spray: _____ sprays in each nostril, _____ daily after the saline.
- 4) Take the antibiotic until it is completely finished. Ideally, your symptoms should improve well before you are done, but it is important to complete the medication to prevent the infection from returning.

We would like your symptoms to be gone for 5-7 days before you finish the antibiotic. If they aren't gone, be sure and call us.



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NASAL IRRIGATION

Make an irrigation solution out of salt, soda and warm water. Start with ½ cup of common table salt and ½ cup of baking soda and mix them together *dry*. Store in a closed container, to keep it dry and clean.

Each time you need to make a solution, take ¼ to ½ teaspoon of the dry salt/soda mix and put in a plastic glass, add about 1 cup of warm water.

Buy a soft rubber bulb syringe (ear bulb syringe) at any drug store. (If you have one at home from when the children were babies, you may use it, but sterilize it first).

Stand by the sink and fill the bulb syringe with the irrigating solution.

Squeeze the bulb to force the solution first into one nostril and then the other, using mild moderate force.

Simply squirt the salt and soda solution into the nose and let it drip out.

Blow your nose gently to clear the secretions. Repeat the process and clear again.

Clean the bulb syringe with a mild solution of bleach and water once a week.

Now, this is the hard part! Squeeze the bulb again with mild to moderate force, and as you squirt the solution into your nose, *sniffle it all the way back* through your nose and into your throat. Use short, sniffing, snorting actions to get the water through.

It will go back into the back of your throat and may make you want to gag. Simply clear your throat, spit it out and repeat. When your nose is completely clear, blow and pat it dry.

You may now use other nasal sprays, as prescribed by your doctor. Since your nose is now moist and clean, the sprays will not irrigate and will provide better coverage and treatment.

Remember! **NEVER blow your nose forcefully while holding it shut. This will build up pressure in your nose and sinuses and can be painful and dangerous.** Just blow gently to clear the mucus and secretions from the nostrils.

“Wash and spray twice a day”. Irrigate at least twice a day, in the morning and evening, followed by nasal sprays. For babies and young children, gently drop some water into the stuffy nose (no force), let it sit until the mucus is softened, and then suck it out with a bulb syringe, or clear it with a tissue.

This procedure is especially useful when you have symptoms, but you may use it routinely to keep yourself from becoming congested. If the solution stings or burns your nose, change the amount of salt and soda or the temperature of water. Since this salt and soda solution resembles normal body fluids, it should feel completely neutral in your nose and should not cause irritation. In fact, the goal is to make your nose and sinuses feel better!