

Sinusitis-colds-irritated throat-congestion-ugh!

Whatever you name it-you feel bad from it.

The upper respiratory tract is a prime target for infection. The upper respiratory tract includes the sinuses, throat, nasal area, and bronchus. This can lead to ear infections too. Most children from 1-5 will have 6-13 “colds” per year. The number decreases as they get older. Day care centers are prime for incubating infections. Breathing unfiltered air with all the microorganisms, pollen, dust, etc can lead to irritations, inflammation, and possible infection. The sinuses are very susceptible, as most have found out. Symptoms include pain in the face, a runny nose, a cough especially at night, and often a run down feeling. But why....

Sinuses are small air pockets in the facial bone draining into the nasal area. Particles deposit from the inspired air into the upper respiratory tract. This inflammation leads to obstruction of the sinus draining area, then infection can more easily occur. Many factors assist in this process including dry air, smoking, pollution, certain medications, allergies, changes in normal anatomy, and more. Certain foods add to the risk as does diving.

Why me, how come I get more infections than others. Some may already have antibodies in the blood stream helping to fend off new infections while others have an immune system more susceptible than others to getting infections. The allergy season increase the risk and enhances the need to have continual treatment to decrease symptoms and possible infections-ahhhh choo.

Treatment

The main ingredient is rest and time. The sinuses are low in blood supply and takes time to heal from an infection. Adequate rest is needed, so avoid wearing down and getting worse. There goes the golf game and I do not even play golf. Leaving the temperature alone often leads to more rest because of feeling bad. The adage to treat the person or child and not the temperature is true. Many viruses are killed easier and faster with a temperature rather than 98.6. You may feel bad but heal faster. A temperature increases metabolism so rest is important to allow the body to heal.

Vitamin C along with other antioxidants helps reduce healing time and minimize symptoms. Orange juice is often thought of but in the quantity to become an effective antioxidant would require 22 glasses. Pushing fluids always helps including orange juice. No caffeine. Substantially increasing your non caffeine fluid intake especially if you have a temperature is essential. Better find the nearest bathroom. Increasing fluids will help hydrate and heal faster. Steam helps relieve congestion form the stem off a cup of hot liquid to the humidifier. Saline nasal sprays assist along with methyl cough drops. All help prevent drying, irritation, and persistent infection.

A real must is to wash your hands to avoid spreading an infection or acquiring a new one. Cover the mouth with sneezing and coughing. Studies have shown air leaving the mouth with a “good” sneeze at 100 mph.

Caution: Contact your Medical Care Provider if:

- a persistent temperature above 102. Less than 2 years old may mean any temperature is serious
- increasing pain in the sinus areas, neck, or ears
- persistent or increasing symptoms. This may mean more has become involved like the lungs, etc.

In the mean time-happy sniffles until we meet again.