

Sinusitis and Hay Fever – Fact Sheet

Hayfever (AKA) allergic rhinitis occurs in response to an allergen that is inhaled, that the individual is already sensitised to, which causes inflammation of the nasal airways and eyes. Signs and symptoms can include; itchy nose, roof of mouth, throat and eyes, watery eyes, sneezing, headaches, watery clear nasal discharge, coughing, wheezing, loss of appetite, trouble sleeping, swollen nose and eye lids and feeling irritable and depressed.

Sinusitis (AKA) bacterial rhinosinusitis often results as a complication of the common cold causing inflammation of the mucosal lining. Can also occur from immunodeficiency, allergies, poor mucociliary clearance mechanisms, dental infections and nasal obstructions.

Common triggers include; pollen, mould, animal dander, dust and other similar inhaled allergens.

- Acute sinusitis – is an infection that lasts up to 4 weeks.
- Subacute sinusitis – is an infection that lasts for 4 weeks to 3 months.
- Recurrent sinusitis – is an infection that occurs more than 3 or 4 times/year lasting a minimum of 10 days with no other symptoms between each occurrence.
- Chronic sinusitis – is an infection that lasts for more than 3 months.

Sinusitis is characterised as having a nasal blockage, nasal discharge, potential facial pain or pressure, possible lack of smell, and lasting for less than 12 weeks. Other signs and symptoms include; fever, chills, frontal headache, previous diagnosis of an acute viral respiratory infection, dental infection, nasal allergy, nasal congestion and purulent discharge pain, tenderness, redness and swelling over the sinus involved.

Nutritional Recommendations

- Allergy testing (e.g. IgG/IgE food profiles and chemical sensitivity test) to try and find the cause.
- Try to avoid any known triggers that promote an allergic reaction. Try using face masks and goggles when outside, closing windows and using air-conditioning, shower thoroughly after being outdoors, mow the lawn regularly, dry laundry inside and keep pets inside or outside as these alone may reduce the risk of irritants entering the mucus membranes.
- Adopt a 'wholefoods' diet by increasing intake of fresh fruits and vegetables, quality proteins and fresh fish for omega 3 fatty acids.
- Incorporate onion into meals as it has anti-microbial properties and can fight off pathogens.
- Adequate hydration including broths, soups, juices, herbal teas and filtered water as this will help with flushing out the lymphatic system, reduce inflammation and help expel mucus.
- Avoid/reduce dairy products including milks, yoghurts and cheeses as these foods are mucus forming.
- If you have red itchy eyes try placing cool cucumber slices on them and then rotating with tea bags directly onto the eyelids once steeped and cooled.

Certain trigger foods may also need to be avoided if symptoms do not reduce.

Customised nutritional plans comprising of a specific food plan with the support of nutrient/herbal supplements can be very effective in the management of sinusitis and hayfever. If you require support please visit www.good4younutrition.com.au