



## ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE CHEST

# ESSENTIAL SINUS RESCUE

When your sinuses are acting up, there's no mistaking the symptoms. From painful pressure to postnasal drip, sinusitis can make you feel miserable day and night. Along with the throbbing headache, you may be dealing with thick yellow or green mucus, a sore throat, and even intense pain in your ears and teeth. Luckily, you can count on powerful, proven plant remedies and a time-tested practice to clear up those sinus passages without making you drowsy, jittery, or dried out. Whether you're suffering from acute or chronic sinusitis, these natural solutions will bring quick, safe relief.



### Eucalyptus:

Eucalyptus has long been a common go-to for clearing up congestion—and for good reason. Along with its ability to open airways and relieve clogged sinuses, eucalyptus oil fights the bacteria and viruses that can cause sinusitis. It has also been used traditionally to treat seasonal allergies, asthma, bronchitis, and pneumonia.

Eucalyptus oil contains potent plant chemicals such as *cineole* and *limonene*, which are known for their antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory capabilities. Studies show that cineole thins mucus, opens air passages, and restores free breathing. In a 10-day clinical trial, cineole relieved bronchitis symptoms and reduced acute coughing fits after just four days. Another human study found that cineole quickly and dramatically lessened sinusitis symptoms, including headache, sinus pressure, congestion, and runny nose. Other clinical trials have seen similar results, making concentrated eucalyptus oil a top choice for fighting off sinus infections naturally. Look for an oil from *Eucalyptus radiata* for the most beneficial balance of healing compounds.

### Myrtle:

The leaves of this evergreen shrub provide a healing oil with strong antibacterial, antiseptic, and anti-inflammatory properties. This medicinal herb contains dozens of plant compounds such as *cineole*, *pinene*, and *limonene*, which offer proven healing effects. Myrtle has been used as a traditional medicine staple as far back as ancient Greece to treat a wide variety of conditions including diabetes, diarrhea, rheumatism, and insomnia. Modern research tells us that myrtle has strong antioxidant, antiviral, antibacterial, liver-protective, and anti-inflammatory properties. It is especially effective against respiratory and sinus infections, bringing quick and lasting relief. This herb's sinus-soothing powers include breaking up mucus and improving expectorant activity. In one large clinical trial, bronchitis patients who took myrtle got better more quickly and completely than those taking a placebo, and their results were superior to patients taking pharmaceutical drugs.

When myrtle teams up with eucalyptus, your sinuses get a double dose of congestion-clearing benefits that start to work immediately. One study found that combining these plant oils can get mucus moving quickly, so you can feel better faster.

Another study found that an herbal medicine containing these two powerhouses effectively reduced symptoms in people with chronic bronchitis. Together, eucalyptus and myrtle take on the causes and symptoms of sinusitis, without the side effects common to over-the-counter decongestants and expectorants.



## Oil of Oregano:

Oregano is best known as a savory flavoring for Mediterranean cuisine, but this humble herb packs a surprising medicinal punch. It's been used to treat dozens of diseases since the days of ancient Rome and Greece, and now modern science has caught on to its safe, effective properties.



Oregano's benefits come from several potent plant compounds including *carvacrol*,

*thymol*, and *rosmarinic acid*. Thymol

brings powerful antifungal activity, and rosmarinic acid is well-known for delivering strong antioxidant protection. But carvacrol is the real superstar and is responsible for much of oregano's healing power. Carvacrol possesses antioxidant, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, anti-cancer, and pain-relieving properties. Its antibacterial actions are so strong that it is even effective against antibiotic-resistant bacteria such as MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) and *E. coli*, a common cause of sinusitis. Carvacrol has also been shown in animal studies to reduce inflammation and pain. One study found that oil of oregano worked just as effectively as opioid painkillers to relieve pain, but without any of the negative side effects linked to prescription pain medication.

That makes oil of oregano a perfect choice for treating sinusitis and relieving the intense pain that comes with inflamed sinuses.

### Know Your Oils

To enjoy their full sinus-relieving benefits, you'll need to take *concentrated food-grade plant oils*—rather than the more commonly found essential oils that are not safe for internal use. Concentrated plant oils act as potent medicines when they're prepared using correct plant species and processed properly to be safe for internal use. These oils are up to 100 times more concentrated than dry herbs, supercharging the powers of their active ingredients.

## Neti Pot:

No matter the cause of your sinus problems, an ancient practice called nasal irrigation can bring quick relief. The basic idea: Rinsing out your sinuses flushes out irritants, relieves dryness, and clears clogged sinus passages so you can breathe freely again. People have been using neti pots—which look like tiny teapots with long, slender spouts that fit snugly in your nostrils—as nasal irrigation vessels for centuries. Here's a quick guide to getting the most relief from your neti pot.

**START** with a clean, dry neti pot.

**FILL IT** with a gentle homemade saline solution: Combine 1 cup of lukewarm filtered or distilled water with one-half teaspoon each of salt and baking soda.

**TILT YOUR HEAD** sideways over a sink at about a 45-degree angle.

**INSERT THE NETI POT SPOUT**

**GENTLY** into your top nostril, and tip it so that the solution slowly flows into that nostril and out through the other. Keep going until the neti pot is empty.

**REMOVE THE NETI POT** from your nostril, pick up your head, and take a deep breath through both nostrils (have a tissue handy for this part).

**REPEAT THE PROCESS** through your other nostril.

To get the best results from your neti pot procedure, keep these tips in mind:

- Breathe through your mouth while using the neti pot.
- Don't use water straight from the tap. Use distilled water instead.
- Stick with lukewarm/room temperature water rather than hot or cold.
- Use your neti pot once or twice daily to clear up congestion.
- Clean and dry your neti pot thoroughly after each use.

