

## Sinus congestion or confusion?

Each year, more than 37 million Americans suffer from a very common condition called sinusitis.



STEVE MULLENIX  
Health Watch

Sinusitis is an inflammation of the lining membrane of any sinus. The body's nasal and sinus membranes respond similarly to viruses, allergic insults and common bacterial infections. The common reaction is that the membranes become swollen and congested. This congestion causes pain, pressure and possibly mucus production which further aggravates the inflammation. This results in a runny, drippy nose.

Congestion of the nasal membranes may even block the Eustachian tubes leading to the ears, resulting in pain, and a feeling of blockage or pressure in the ears. This is due to fluid that is backed against the ear drum.

More often than not, individuals want to treat the condition with over-the-counter (OTC) medications. There are many different OTC medications available to relieve the common complaints of sinus pain and pressure. Most of these medications are combination products that include a pain reliever, such as acetaminophen, with a decongestant or an antihistamine.

The goal of an OTC medication is to:

- Reopen the nasal passages
- Reduce the nasal congestion
- Relieve the pain and pressure symptoms
- Reduce the potential for complications

OTC medications are available in a number of different combinations and dosage forms. Selecting the combination that is correct for your condition requires some understanding as to the cause of your condition and the action of the medication.

### Nasal saline sprays (non-medicated nasal spray)

As an invaluable addition to the list of OTC medication, a nasal saline spray is ideal for all types of nasal problems. The added moisture produced by these saline products reduces the thick secretions and assist in the removal of infectious agents. There is no risk of becoming "addicted" to nasal saline. It can be applied as a mist to the nose up to six times a day.

### Nasal decongestant sprays (medicated nasal sprays)

Medicated nasal decongestant sprays clean nasal passages almost immediately and are useful in treatment of the initial stage of the common cold or viral infection.

For individuals with recurrent nasal swelling due to seasonal allergy problems, products such as cromolyn sodium nasal sprays are better alternatives. These products can be used up to four times a day during the allergy season to prevent the release

### Take the sinusitis quiz

The most common concern is, "Do I have a sinus infection?"

Taking the following quiz may help you determine if you have sinusitis.

Choose "yes" if you have any of the following symptoms for 10 days or longer; otherwise, choose "No."

1. Facial pressure/pain? **yes no**
2. Headache pain? **yes no**
3. Congestion or stuffy nose? **yes no**
4. Thick, yellow-green nasal discharge? **yes no**

5. Low grade fever (99-100°)? **yes no**
6. Bad breath? **yes no**
7. Pain in the upper teeth? **yes no**

If you answered "Yes" to three or more of the symptoms listed above, you may have a sinus infection resulting from allergies, bacteria, or a response to fungi. An examination by your physician or an ear, nose and throat specialist may be warranted.

of histamine from the tissues.

### Decongestant medications

Pressure and congestion are common symptoms of sinus passage swelling. Decongestant medications are OTC products that relieve this swelling, but do nothing to treat the cause of the inflammation. They reduce blood flow to the nasal membranes leading to improved airflow, decreased pressure in the sinuses and head, and subsequently less discomfort. Commonly known products in this class are medications such as Pseudoephedrine, Phenylephrine, and phenylpropranolamine.

### Decongestant-combination products

Some medications are combinations of products to relieve both the symptoms and discomfort of the condition. Combinations such as Tylenol Sinus or Advil Cold and Sinus contain a decongestant as well as a pain reliever.

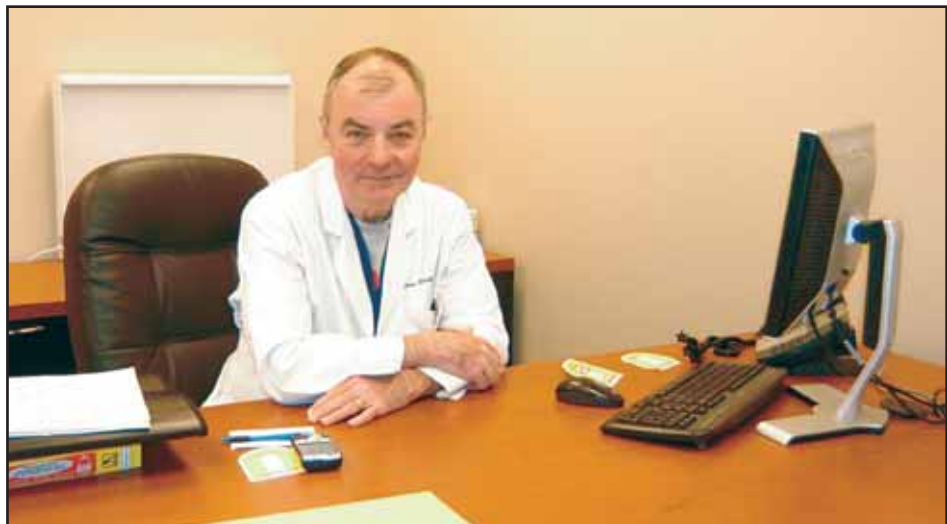
### Antihistamine medications

Antihistamines combat

the allergic response leading to nasal congestions. These products are used to relieve the allergic response of itching, sneezing, and nasal congestion. They relieve the drainage associated with the allergic reaction, but not the congestion. Antihistamines tend to cause a little sedation or drowsiness. Recently, a new class of antihistamines identified as non-sedative antihistamines, have greatly reduced this unwanted side effect.

There are a number of other combinations available also, antihistamine with decongestants. Antihistamines with decongestants and pain relievers. Another possible combination is a decongestant with cough suppressant, with or without pain medications. The combinations are quite confusing, so don't hesitate to ask for assistance. Your physician or pharmacist is invaluable in selecting the right combination of product or products for your symptoms.

Steve Mullenix (R.Ph) co-owns The Pharmacy in Mount Olive with his wife, Sherry Mullenix (J.D., R.N.). They can be reached at 631-1201.



MELANIE PATTERSON / TO THE NORTH JEFFERSON NEWS  
Dr. Thomas E. Moody, urologist, sees patients at the Gardendale Medical Clinic every Monday and Wednesday.

## Doctor initiates statewide reform for cancer screening

BY MELANIE PATTERSON  
The North Jefferson News

Dr. Thomas E. Moody is far more than your everyday doctor. A urologist, Moody has lobbied successfully for new state laws regarding prostate cancer screenings and he helped host six free screenings in 2008.

All of that is outside of his private practice, which has a booming schedule of its own.

Moody has practiced urology for more than 30 years. For three years, he has seen patients every Monday and Wednesday at the Gardendale Medical Clinic.

Moody said he has found his work in north Jefferson County to be "very gratifying. ... I think patients have liked receiving specialty care without going to Birmingham."

Urology is a surgical subspecialty that deals with the male reproductive system and the male and female urinary systems.

As one of 16 doctors who make up Urology Centers of Alabama, P.C., which is the largest urology practice in Alabama, Moody finds it important to remain "non-judgmental" with his

patients, particularly when they are dealing with impotence or incontinence.

Moody described the two conditions as "the most embarrassing to people." Incontinence is particularly devastating, he said, because it can keep people confined to their homes.

While those conditions are devastating, prostate cancer is deadly. That is why Moody works so hard to convince men to receive screening for the cancer.

Last year, Moody held free screenings in Perry, Wilcox, Hale, Marengo, Madison and Jefferson counties. Helping him were Urology Centers of Alabama director of health education and information Sherry T. Wilson and others.

Four of the screenings were funded by a \$50,000 Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) grant.

State and local health departments worked with Moody and Wilson and got the word out for each screening. As a result, more than 500 men received screening for prostate cancer.

It was the first time many of the men in the poor, rural counties had received such screenings.

Screening for prostate cancer only takes about 10 minutes. Moody said many of the men told him that it "wasn't as bad as they thought it would be."

The benefit was that several of them who did indeed have prostate cancer received treatment.

Moody had made a commitment to treat men regardless of their ability to pay if they had prostate cancer, and several hospitals agreed to do the same.

Moody was largely responsible for passage of an Alabama bill signed into law in 2007 that requires insurance coverage for prostate screening if requested by a physician, according to the October 2008 edition of M.D. News.

In addition, Moody was the key player for the legislature putting \$100,000 into the state budget for prostate screening in 2009. Previously, there was no money budgeted for prostate screening.



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The North Jefferson News



## Play Ball!

Gardendale Girls Softball



2009 Spring Season  
Registration Information

Be part of one of the best Girls Softball leagues in the area! Any girl from the age of 3 to 18 who wants to enjoy the fun and excitement of playing softball with friends can play. (Gardendale residency not required)

### Sign - Up Dates

|                             |                   |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| *Saturday, January 31, 2009 | 9:00 am - 1:00 pm | Gardendale Civic Center |
| *Thursday, February 5, 2009 | 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm | Gardendale Civic Center |
| *Saturday, February 7, 2009 | 9:00 am - 1:00 pm | Gardendale Civic Center |
| *Sunday, February 8, 2009   | 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm | Gardendale Civic Center |

### 2009 Registration Fees

T-Ball Division (Ages 3-4): Free  
All other Divisions (Ages 4-18): \$125 per player  
\*Sibling discount (must be from same household): 2<sup>nd</sup> child fee: \$105, 3<sup>rd</sup> child: \$85, Minimum fee is \$85.

Registration  
Can register in person or fill out the register form online ([www.gardendalegirlssoftball.com](http://www.gardendalegirlssoftball.com)) and mail registration form and fees to:

GGSA / Registration / P.O. Box 889 / Gardendale, AL 35071

Player Evaluation (tryouts)  
Mandatory tryouts will be held on Saturday, February 21, 2009 from 10:00am to 4:00pm at Luman Harris Park. There will also be late registration and tryouts on Sunday, 2/22 from 2-4pm.

Help Wanted!  
Coaches are needed at all age levels. Team sponsors are also needed! Find out how to become a coach or sponsor at registration or visit our website!

Please visit our website at [www.gardendalegirlssoftball.com](http://www.gardendalegirlssoftball.com) for more information!

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