

TRIANGLE FAMILY CARE, P.A.

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Instructions for Upper Respiratory Tract Infections & Sinusitis

As an adjunct to prescription medication that you may or may not need, the following instructions may help with symptom control and perhaps hasten resolution of your symptoms. Remember, antibiotics treat bacterial infections only; they will not treat infections due to viruses, fungi or allergies.

- **Rest** –It is important to rest, take time off from work if needed, do not do anything strenuous; your body needs its energy to fight the infection.
- **Increase fluids** – Drinking lots of clear fluids can help mobilize secretions which allows your body to more easily clear infections. Generally avoid dairy products, alcohol and caffeinated beverages when sick – stick with water, juices, decaf or herbal tea and electrolyte solutions (like Gatorade).
- **Ibuprofen** - If you are not pregnant and do not have severe stomach problems and are not allergic to ibuprofen, use Ibuprofen (Advil, Nuprin, etc.) up to 800mg three times per day. Ibuprofen can help with pain, joint and body aches, headaches, and sore throats. If pregnant or if you have severe stomach problems, use Tylenol or Acetaminophen up to 1000mg every 4 hours as needed.
- **Sudafed** – For nasal congestion and runny noses and facial/head pressure, use generic Sudafed during the day. Taking Sudafed too close to bedtime can cause insomnia.
- **Generic Afrin Nose Spray (oxymetazoline)** – For nasal congestion, head and/or ear pressure, use generic Afrin nose spray 2 times per day for no more than 4 days in a row. Using this longer can cause a rebound phenomenon which can lead to habitual use of this medicine.
- **Robitussin DM** – For cough and to help loosed secretions, Robitussin DM or its generic equivalent can help.
- **Zinc Lozenges** – Consider trying Zinc lozenges (like Cold-EEZE®) 5x/day at the earliest onset of symptoms for several days.
- **Hand Washing and Disposable Towels** – To help prevent the spread of infections to family members and co-workers; it is important to wash hands frequently with soap and water and to use disposable towels to dry hands. A community towel can easily spread infectious agents like viruses.

Most viral infections last anywhere from 1 to 3 weeks, usually 7-10 days. If your symptoms worsen or do not resolve after this period of time, please see your doctor. You may have developed a secondary bacterial complication.