

Honey Kills Bacteria That Cause Chronic Sinusitis

Honey is very effective in killing bacteria in all its forms, especially the drug-resistant biofilms that often make treating chronic rhinosinusitis difficult. A study found that in eleven isolates of three separate biofilms, honey was significantly more effective than commonly-used antibiotics in killing both planktonic and biofilm-grown forms of the bacteria.

The findings may hold important clinical implications in the treatment of refractory chronic rhinosinusitis, which affects 31 million people each year in the United States alone, and is among the three most common chronic diseases in North America.



Source: [Science Daily September 23, 2008](#)

Going back to basics, and using natural therapies that do not add to the problems caused by overuse of antibiotics, is clearly a major leap in the right direction.

Traditional [antibiotics are increasingly ineffective](#) against many microbes, to the point that the Centers for Disease Control has stated, “**nearly all significant bacterial infections in the world are becoming resistant to the most commonly prescribed antibiotic treatments.**”

The return to honey as a natural healing therapy makes all the sense in the world. Honey was a conventional therapy in fighting infection up until the early 20th century, at which time its use slowly vanished as penicillin took center stage.

But today, a fair number of studies exist to reconfirm its medicinal benefits.

[The International Journal of Lower Extremity Wounds](#) states that positive findings on honey in wound care have been reported from:

- 17 randomized controlled trials involving a total of 1965 participants
- 5 clinical trials of other forms involving 97 participants
- 16 trials on a total of 533 wounds on experimental animals

There is also a large amount of evidence in the form of published case studies.

One thing to remember here though, is that not all honey is appropriate for medicinal use. The antibacterial activity in some honeys is 100 times more powerful than in others.

The Extraordinary Healing Properties of Manuka Honey

In July 2007, the Food and Drug Administration gave Derma Sciences, a New Jersey-based manufacturer of wound-care products, clearance to sell Manuka honey wound and burn dressings as medical devices in the U.S. (The dressings, called MEDIHONEY Wound & Burn Dressings can be found online from medical supply stores. Amazon.com also sells them.)

The Manuka honey approved for medicinal use has been shown to have special anti-infection, antibacterial, and anti-inflammatory properties.

Clinical trials have found that Manuka honey from New Zealand, made with pollen gathered from the flowers of the Manuka bush (a medicinal plant), can effectively eradicate more than **250 clinical strains of bacteria**, including resistant varieties such as:

- MRSA (methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus)
- MSSA (methicillin sensitive Staphylococcus aureus)
- VRE (vancomycin-resistant enterococci)

It's also effective for killing the bacteria Helicobacter Pylori, which can cause stomach ulcers.

What is the Unique Manuka Factor (UMF)?

Manuka honey is rated according to its "Unique Manuka Factor," (UMF). It is so called because no one has yet been able to discover the unique substance involved that gives it its extraordinary antibacterial activity. Honey releases hydrogen peroxide through an enzymatic process, which explains its general antiseptic qualities, but Active Manuka honey contains "something else" that makes it far superior to other types of honey when it comes to killing off bacteria. Hence, the UMF number is the standard description for the antibacterial strength of the honey.

To get its rating, a sample of the honey batch is placed on a plate with a bacterial culture. The area where the bacterial growth stops is then measured. This area is compared to a similar area produced by a solution of phenol and water. The UMF number refers to the equivalent percentage of phenol in water, so, for example, honey with a UMF rating of 10 has the same antibacterial strength as 10 percent phenol. A rating of UMF 10 or higher is recommended for medicinal use.

If you're in a pinch, using raw, organic honey is also acceptable. But avoid using the processed or refined honey generally found in the supermarket. "USA Grade A Honey" has over 75 percent probability of being force-fed and regurgitated high fructose corn syrup, flavored, and colored, honey. Due to its pH and lack of naturally occurring enzymatic, antibacterial or anti-microbial characteristics, this type of honey can do more harm than good.

How to Prevent Recurring Sinus Infections

Although I didn't specifically focus on the use of honey for sinus infections above, I believe it can clearly be of help, and it wouldn't hurt to keep some available in your natural remedies cabinet.

Sinus infections (sinusitis) strike 1 in 7, or about 37 million Americans every year, and health care workers report about 33 million cases of chronic sinusitis to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention annually. So sinus infections are something many people struggle with.

Poor food quality, excessive exposure to toxic chemicals and a high-speed lifestyle in combination with poor adaptation to high stress levels puts you at greater risk for developing sinus infections (as well as all other types of disease). Therefore, maintaining a robust immune system and creating an environment inhospitable to bacterial and fungal proliferation can help prevent sinus infections from occurring in the first place.

Here are a few of my top preventive measures:

1. Avoid eating sugar or grains, as [detailed in my nutrition plan](#)
2. Consume good quality krill or fish oil, high in omega-3 fats DHA and EPA
3. Eat coconut oil. Coconut oil is rich in lauric acid, which is known for being antiviral, antibacterial and antifungal. However, be careful with which oil you choose, as many coconut oils contain fungal toxins. This is because they are commonly made with copras, or dried coconuts, which are often contaminated with mycotoxins. So in order to fully enjoy the benefits of this coconut oil, you will want to be sure that you find a company that uses only fresh coconuts to make their oil.
4. Avoid eating [these top 10 mycotoxic foods](#)
5. Get [proper sleep](#)
6. Get regular [exercise](#)

For more details and great tips on how to treat sinusitis without the use of drugs, please review my previous article, [How to Flush Away Sinus Ills](#).

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