

## Watch that cold Air - You can get Bronchitis and Sinusitis!

Winter is undoubtedly here! And with it has come the Arctic blast of cold air.

Now being outdoors getting fresh air is a good idea but you must still protect yourself and your airways.

Exerting yourself outside in cold temperatures means you can 'drag' in a lot of cold air quickly. Not a problem if you have your face covered with a mask or scarf. But if you don't, even temperatures near the freezing mark can cause damage to your nasal, sinus or bronchial tubes in just a few minutes.

You can easily freeze your sinus cavities and worse yet your throat and upper bronchial tubes.

At first you might not even realize damage has been done. Signs that damage has occurred may not appear or be evident for a day or two. But then you realize you don't feel right.

Not a cold or flu but your sinuses may hurt and your throat hurts. No one else around you has been sick. Then it dawns on you that maybe you did feel your nose and forehead feel a little on the frozen side after you shoveled outside for an hour. But what about that sore throat, it is burning and quite sore. Now you remember - your upper chest and throat hurt from breathing in that cold air too.

Well, you most likely have frozen your throat and nasal passages. Wow! Bet you didn't think you could even do that. Unfortunately you can. And it happens more than folks realize. It is not necessarily frost bite. But delicate tissues can be damaged.

Now your forehead sinuses and face hurts, your throat is sore, your voice is cracking and you are coughing! What the world? Remember sinusitis and bronchitis doesn't necessarily mean you have an infection (yet) - the 'itis' part of the terms means "inflammation".

Your body will react to extreme cold and this can and will do tissue damage similar to being burned. Your tissues will swell and be very painful. You will feel lousy when this happens and as your body begins to heal.

You have to be careful because even slightly freezing your airways can lead to infections. Just like other types of burns the body has to replace and repair the damaged tissues. As the mucous membranes heal the damaged tissues have to be replaced with new. Your body will produce extra drainage in the sinuses as it clears away dead cells. So you will have a runny nose and you may cough up phlegm too.

Although you are not technically ill you will feel like you are. You might even run a slight fever. It is very important to not re-irritate or do more damage to these 'burned' tissues. Stay indoors; drink plenty of liquids and rest. If you have to go outside make sure you have your face covered so you do not breathe in any more cold air.

How to get a little relief? Inhaling essential oils placed in a bowl of steaming hot water will help to relieve the congestion and inflammation. Depending on what essential oils you choose you might be able to relieve enough swelling to help you breath better, not cough so much and to speed the healing of these damaged tissues.

You can use the same essential oils that give you relief when you have the flu or a cold. Try Eucalyptus and Peppermint in a bowl of hot water. Put a towel over your head and breathe normally. Don't use boiling water, just very hot tap water. It will feel good on your sinuses and on your throat.

Some folks use any variety of essential oils. You might try Rosemary and Peppermint or any combination of the following. Eucalyptus (several to choose), Lavender, Pine, Thyme, Tea tree or our Pure Cleansing Blend, Easy Breathe or Respiratory blends.

Do take care of your self and be careful. You can set yourself for repeated bronchitis or worse yet lung problems if you don't protect your airways from extreme cold. Stay safe and stay warm. Be prepared in case you do accidentally freeze your delicate mucous membranes and tissues of your airway.

You might want to read previous articles for help with both bronchitis and sinusitis. You can also use our Search box on <http://www.birchhillhappenings.com/results.htm> to type in keywords such as cough, sinusitis or bronchitis for information.

For more articles about Bronchitis visit here <http://birchhillhappenings.com/bronchit.htm> and another one here <http://birchhillhappenings.com/v652004.htm> and <http://birchhillhappenings.com/v862006.htm>

For an article on Sinusitis visit here <http://birchhillhappenings.com/sinus.htm>

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