

## Sinus Irrigation with Gentamicin

### *For sinusitis*

*This handout gives step-by-step instructions for sinus irrigation using gentamicin solution.*

### What is sinus irrigation?

One treatment for *sinusitis* (sinus infection) is to rinse out your sinuses. This is called *sinus irrigation*. Your health care provider has prescribed an antibiotic medicine called *gentamicin* for you to use for this.

Gentamicin irrigation solution is easy to use. If you have never rinsed out your sinuses before, it may take some time to get used to.

### What will I need to buy?

- **Gentamicin irrigation solution:** You can buy this at UWMC's pharmacy, or at your local compounding pharmacy (see "Important Instructions," below).
- **Irrigating device:** You will also need to buy 1 of these devices:
  - Large medical syringe (30 mL)
  - Sinus rinse squeeze bottle
  - Neti pot

### Important Instructions

- **Allow 24 hours for your prescription to be ready after you place your order.** Gentamicin is a *compounded medicine*. This means it is made only when ordered and only by compounding pharmacies. Your medicine will usually be ready 24 hours after you turn in your prescription, or on the next weekday. If you turn in your prescription on Friday, you will be able to pick up your medicine on Monday.
- **Always store your bottle of gentamicin solution in your refrigerator.**



*Talk with your pharmacist if you have questions about your gentamicin solution.*

- **The solution should be OK to use for 14 days** from the day it was made by the pharmacy. Do **not** use it after the expiration date that is on the bottle label.
- **Clean your irrigating device often.** Check to make sure it is clean before each time you rinse. Do **not** place it in the dishwasher. Wash it with warm, soapy water and let it air dry. Or, follow the cleaning instructions that came with your device.

## How to Irrigate

- Measure out the amount of the gentamicin solution you will need. The usual dose is 50 mL.
- You may let the solution you measured out warm up for 30 minutes before you use it. Keep the rest of the solution in the refrigerator.
- Use 1/2 of the solution (25 mL) you measured out for the first nostril:
  - Stand in the shower or lean over the sink.
  - Tilt your head forward and turn it to one side.
  - Place the irrigating device in your upper nostril. Pour or squirt the solution gently into your nostril. Aim for the **back** of your head, not the top of your head. Gravity or gentle pressure should help the solution move through your sinuses and out your lower nostril.
  - Never force the solution through your nostrils. If gentle pressure does not push the solution through your sinuses, **stop**.
  - Some solution may drain into your throat. This is normal. Try gently breathing out through your nose to help the solution drain through your lower nostril and not down your throat.
- Repeat these steps with your other nostril, using the other 1/2 of the solution (25 mL).
- Rinse both nostrils with the gentamicin solution 2 times a day, or as directed by your health care team, usually for 10 days.
- At first, you may feel mild burning or stinging when you rinse with the solution. This should go away after the first few times you use it.

### Questions?

Your questions are important. Please call the Cystic Fibrosis Clinic if you have questions or concerns. Clinic staff will call you back.

Adult Cystic Fibrosis Clinic  
Nurse: 206-598-8446

To make an appointment at the Cystic Fibrosis Clinic:  
206-598-4615

Clinic hours are weekdays,  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206-598-6190 and ask for the Pulmonary fellow on call to be paged.

## UWMC Pharmacy

Here are the location, hours, and phone number for the pharmacy at UWMC:

*Location:* 3rd floor (main level) of the hospital, near the Cascade elevators

*Hours:* Weekdays, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
Weekends and holidays, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

*Phone:* 206-598-4363