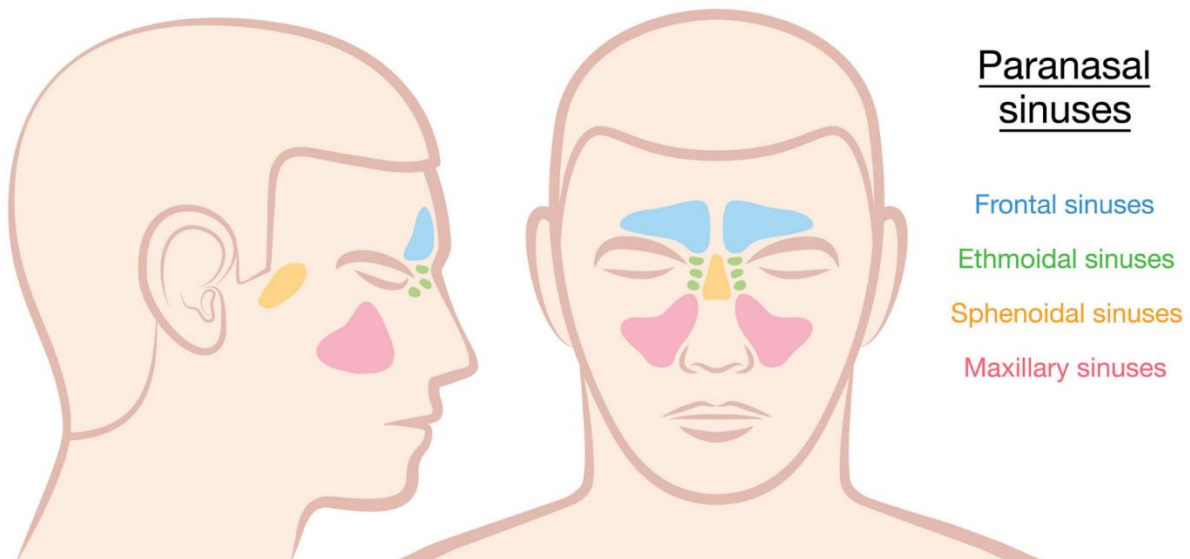


# Sinus Self-Massage Handout

## Sinus types

Before learning about sinus massage techniques, it's important to have a general understanding of the different types of sinus cavities in your skull. The sinuses are named according to which bones they are in.

- **Ethmoidal sinuses:** Located between your eyes, the ethmoidal sinuses are a common source of infection. A headache from an ethmoidal sinus infection is typically felt behind the nose.
- **Maxillary sinuses:** Located below your eyes in your cheekbones, this cavity is the biggest and most prone to infection. Pain from the maxillary sinuses can be felt spreading to your teeth.
- **Sphenoidal sinuses:** Located behind your eyes toward the back of the head, there are two sphenoidal sinuses that make up the middle portion of the base of the skull. A deep pain is generally felt.
- **Frontal sinuses:** Located above your eyes at the lower portion of your forehead, there are two triangular-shaped sinuses that drain into the middle of the nose. Pain or pressure is typically felt on the face and head.



## **General sinus face massage**

- To start, place your four fingers on each of your temples and gently massage in a circular motion. If you feel a tense spot, hold and breathe for several seconds. You can continue along parts of your forehead and hairline.
- Next, take your thumb and index finger and place them on your eyebrow closest to your nose while gently pinching. Hold this position for several seconds. Slowly work your way across the eyebrow toward your ear.
- Then take four fingers and place them on the inside of your cheekbone near the bottom of your nose. Gently press and drag your fingers outward. Repeat several times.
- As you finish toward the outside of your ear, gently massage the temporomandibular joint (TMJ), which connects the lower jaw to the skull. If you can't find it, open your mouth and you should be able to feel it protrude out.
- Bring your fingers to your ear and slowly massage around this area with fingers in front of and behind the ears in an upward and downward motion.

## **Frontal Sinus Massage**

- Take both of your index and middle fingers and place them above your eyebrows, toward the middle of your forehead.
- Slowly and gently massage outward in a circular motion, toward the temples.
- Repeat this motion for about 30 seconds to a minute.

## **Maxillary Sinus Massage**

- Place each of your index and middle fingers on either side of your nose, just between your cheekbones and upper jaw. Try using your thumbs instead of your index fingers for stronger pressure.
- Gently massage this area using a circular motion.
- Repeat for around 30 seconds to a minute.

## **Ethmoid Sinus massage**

- Take your index fingers and place them on the sides of your nose bridge.
- Feel around for the area right between the corners of your eyes and your nasal bone.
- Put slightly firm pressure on that spot with your index fingers for around 15 seconds.
- Next, make a slow downward stroke down the side of your nose bridge.
- You can also use small circles to massage this area back toward the top of the nose. And repeat.

## **Sphenoid sinus massage**

Using your index fingers, start gently massaging on the side of your head near your ears in an up and down motion. Slowly work your way down to the earlobes. Repeat one to two times.

## **Pressure points to drain sinuses**

In addition to manual massages, you can also access sinus pressure points using a technique called acupressure. This ancient healing technique originated in China and uses the same principles as acupuncture – except you use your fingers to trigger the pressure points instead of needles. Here are some pressure points to trigger to help relieve sinus pain and congestion. Simply press and gently massage these areas for several minutes or until you feel relief.

- **Acupressure Point BL2:** Located where your eyebrow meets your nose, this pressure point can help relieve frontal headaches.
- **Acupressure Point GB20:** Located at the back of your head where the skull meets neck muscles, this pressure point can relieve midline headaches.
- **Acupressure Point L3:** Located on your foot between the tendons of your big toe and second toe, this pressure point can help with headaches.
- **Acupressure Point LI4:** Located on your hand between the thumb and index finger, this pressure point can help relieve sinus congestion.
- **Acupressure Point LI 20:** Located at the base of your nose, this pressure point can help relieve sinus pressure.
- **Acupressure Point SI18:** Located where your cheekbones meet your nose, this pressure point can relieve sinus congestion.

## Optional Sinus Massage Tips

For any of the sinus massages you try, if you don't feel like your sinuses are clear, feel free to repeat the massages every hour or so. Additionally, try out these optional tips for an even more soothing, relaxing, and effective sinus massage.

- Place your hands on a heated-up microwavable hot pack or rub your hands together to warm them up a bit before massaging.
- Lay down and place a microwavable hot pack on your forehead or under the back of your neck while you give yourself the sinus massages.
- Add a drop of your favourite essential oil to a base oil (base oil eg. grapeseed or jojoba oil), rub between your hands before performing the massage. Always be careful with topical use of essential oils – patch test on your skin before your face if you haven't used it before and check the label to know if it is safe to use on your skin. Some oils, while beautiful in scent and having great uplifting effects, can make you more prone to sunburn – so keep this in mind if you plan to be out in the sunshine afterwards.

While at-home remedies can provide relief from mild sinus infections and sinus-related congestion, you should see a doctor for more chronic symptoms.

SOURCES: <https://integrisok.com/resources/on-your-health/2022/april/sinus-massage-techniques-that-reduce-congestion#:~:text=Place%20your%20index%20and%20middle,one%20to%20two%20more%20times.>  
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