



Sinusitis

What is Sinusitis?

Sinusitis is a bacterial infection of the sinus cavities. The sinuses are hollow air spaces within the bones surrounding the nose. They produce mucus, which drains into the nose. If your nose is swollen, this can block the sinuses and cause pain and infection.



A Frontal Sinus B Ethmoid Sinuses C Maxillary Sinus D Sphenoid Sinus

How does it occur?

Sinusitis may develop if the openings between your sinuses and the nose become blocked. This may occur after a cold or an allergic reaction such as hay fever. Having a **deviated septum** (when the thin wall dividing your nose shifts away from the middle), nasal allergies, nasal polyps and other conditions such as smoking or upper tooth infections may increase your risk to have sinusitis.

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What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of sinusitis include:

- Colored nasal discharge
- Increased nasal obstruction
- Persistent pain over one or more sinus cavities and/or a headache
- Cough, especially at night
- Ache in the teeth or upper jaw

How long will the symptoms last?

Be patient: the average cold lasts nine days, and sinus infections can last more than two weeks even with appropriate treatment. If your symptoms get worse or if you do not see an improvement after 10 to 14 days follow up with your doctor.

How do we treat sinusitis?

Most cases of sinusitis are in fact colds or viruses and will get better as your nasal congestion improves. However, if your symptoms last more than 7- 10 days your doctor may consider antibiotics. Over-the-counter medications can help relieve symptoms like pain and congestion.

Side effects: Antibiotics can cause side effects. The most common are rash, nausea, and diarrhea. Other side effects are possible.

How can I take care of myself?

Over-the-Counter Symptom Relief Strategies:

Decongestants (to relieve stuffiness):

- Pseudoephedrine (Sudafed®)
- Oxymetazoline 0.05% (Afrin®) (use no more than 3 days)

Antihistamines (largely to help treat allergies)

- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®)
- Loratadine (Claritin®) or other non-sedating Antihistamines

The following remedies may help:

- Saline irrigation
- Zinc gluconate lozenges
- Vitamin C
- Echinacea extract

The following remedies have not been proven to help Sinusitis:

- Steam
- Saline spray
- Guaifenesin

Disclaimer: This document is for informational purposes only and is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Talk with your doctor if you have Questions about individual health concerns or specific treatment options.

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