

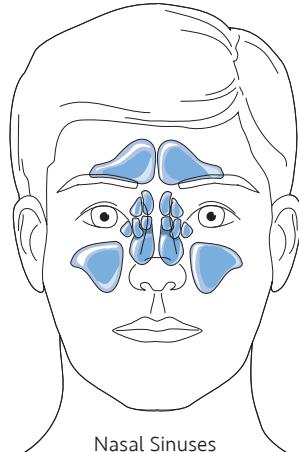


Sinus problems

Your sinuses are behind your cheekbones and forehead and around your eyes.

Healthy sinuses drain almost a quart of mucus every day. They keep the air you breathe wet. Your sinuses can't drain right if they are blocked, infected, or swollen. Sinus problems include:

- A sinus infection. This can be acute or chronic.
- Sinus congestion without an infection



Nasal Sinuses

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Sinus Infection

- Fever
- Green, yellow, or bloody-colored nasal discharge.
- Foul-smelling or tasting postnasal drip.
- Severe headache that doesn't get better when you take an over-the-counter pain reliever. The headache is worse in the morning or when bending forward.
- Pain between the nose and lower eyelid. Cheek or upper jaw pain. A feeling of pressure inside the head. Stuffy nose.
- Swelling around the eyes, nose, cheeks, and forehead
- Cough that worsens at night
- Fatigue

For sinus congestion without an infection, drainage is clear and there is no fever.



CAUSES

- Bacterial, viral, or fungal infection
- Sneezing hard with your mouth closed or blowing your nose too much with a cold.
- Irritants like tobacco smoke, air pollutants, etc.
- Hay fever or other allergies
- A nasal deformity
- Sinuses that don't drain well

TREATMENT

Sinus congestion without an infection does not need an antibiotic and can be treated with self-care. A decongestant helps break up the congestion.

An acute sinus infection usually clears up in 2 weeks with an antibiotic, a decongestant, and nasal spray. When this is not the case, the problem may be a chronic sinus infection which takes longer to treat and/or may need further investigation to diagnose the cause.

An antifungal medicine helps treat a fungal infection in the sinuses. Surgery may be needed to drain the sinuses. Surgery can be done to enlarge a sinus passage that is too narrow to allow proper drainage.



TRIAGE QUESTIONS



With a recent headache, fever, sinus pressure and pain, and yellow, green, or bloody nasal discharge, are all of the following symptoms now present, especially in a child?

- Sudden onset of a fever
- Redness and swelling of the eyelid(s) or area around the eye(s).
- Protruding eye(s) and pain behind the eye(s)
- Problems moving the eye(s)
- Eye pain and redness

NO

YES ➔

GET EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE



Do you have 2 or more of the following symptoms?

- Fever
- Green, yellow, or bloody-colored nasal discharge for more than 3 days. This may occur with a foul-smelling or bad-tasting drainage into the back of the throat.
- Headache that gets worse when you bend forward and that may not be relieved with over-the-counter pain relievers
- Pain (usually throbbing) around the eye(s), cheek(s), upper jaw(s), and/or between the nose and eye socket(s)

NO

YES ➔

SEE DOCTOR



Have you been treated for a sinus infection and do symptoms not improve after taking the prescribed medicine for 48 hours? Or, do symptoms return after you are done with prescribed treatment?

NO

YES ➔

SEE DOCTOR



USE SELF-CARE



SELF-CARE / PREVENTION

- Use a cool-mist humidifier especially in the bedroom.
- Breathe in steam from a bowl of hot water or shower.
- Put a warm washcloth, warm or cold compress over the sinus area of your face. Use the one that helps most for the pain.
- Drink plenty of liquids.
- Take an over-the-counter (OTC) medicine for pain as directed on the label.
- Take an OTC decongestant or an OTC pain reliever with a decongestant (e.g., Tylenol Sinus). {Note: Some persons should not take decongestants.}
- Use nose drops only for the number of days prescribed. Repeated use of them creates a dependency. Don't share nose drops with others. Throw the drops away after treatment.
- Nasal washes with salt water.