



SINUS INFECTION

What are sinuses?

Sinuses are pockets of air behind your cheeks, eyebrows, and jaw. They make mucus that cleans particles out of the air you breathe.

What causes sinus infections?

Sinus infections can be caused by viruses, bacteria, or fungus. Most sinus infections are caused by bacteria, and they often begin soon after an infection with the virus that causes the common cold.

What are the symptoms of sinus infections?

- Stuffy nose
- Pain or pressure around the eyes and cheeks
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Fever
- Pain in upper teeth
- Mucus draining down the back of the throat

How does someone get a sinus infection?

Sinus infections can happen when a virus, like the one that causes the common cold, attacks the lining of the sinuses and makes them swell. Mucus builds up in the swollen sinuses. The built-up mucus can cause pain or pressure. Trapped mucus can also be a good place for bacteria to grow. This can lead to a bacterial sinus infection.

How can a sinus infection be prevented?

Washing hands often is one of the best ways to prevent infections. Using humidifiers may help, particularly during cold winter months when indoor air is very dry. Second-hand cigarette smoke and other air pollutants can cause swelling of the sinuses, which may lead to an infection.

What is the treatment?

Most sinus infections will get better on their own. A nose spray with decongestant can be used to shrink swollen sinus linings. Do not use decongestant nose spray for more than 3 days. Using it for more than 3 days can lead to worse swelling of the sinuses. Drinking plenty of fluids and sipping hot fluids can also help. Some bacterial sinus infections may need to be treated with antibiotics.

When should a healthcare provider be called?

Call your healthcare provider if symptoms do not improve.