



Sinusitis

What is sinusitis?

Sinusitis is an inflammation (swelling) of the lining inside the sinuses — air-filled spaces in the bones that are around the eyes and behind the nose. When sinuses become blocked and fill with fluid, germs can grow and make you sick. Blocked sinuses can be caused by the common cold, “hay fever” or nasal polyps (small lumps inside the nose).

Sinusitis can happen once in a while, or keep happening for a long period of time.

What are the symptoms of sinusitis?

Sinusitis can cause:

- Thick yellow or green stuff that runs from the nose or down the throat.
- Unusual bad taste or bad breath.
- Nasal stuffiness.
- Face pain or pressure.
- Cough.
- Headache.
- Toothache.
- Fever and chills.
- Tiredness or fatigue.
- Swelling around the eyes or cheeks.

How do allergies and sinusitis go together?

When you have allergic rhinitis (“hay fever”), it causes your nose to get stuffed up, and that blocks the sinuses. Also, mold allergies can cause a form of sinusitis.



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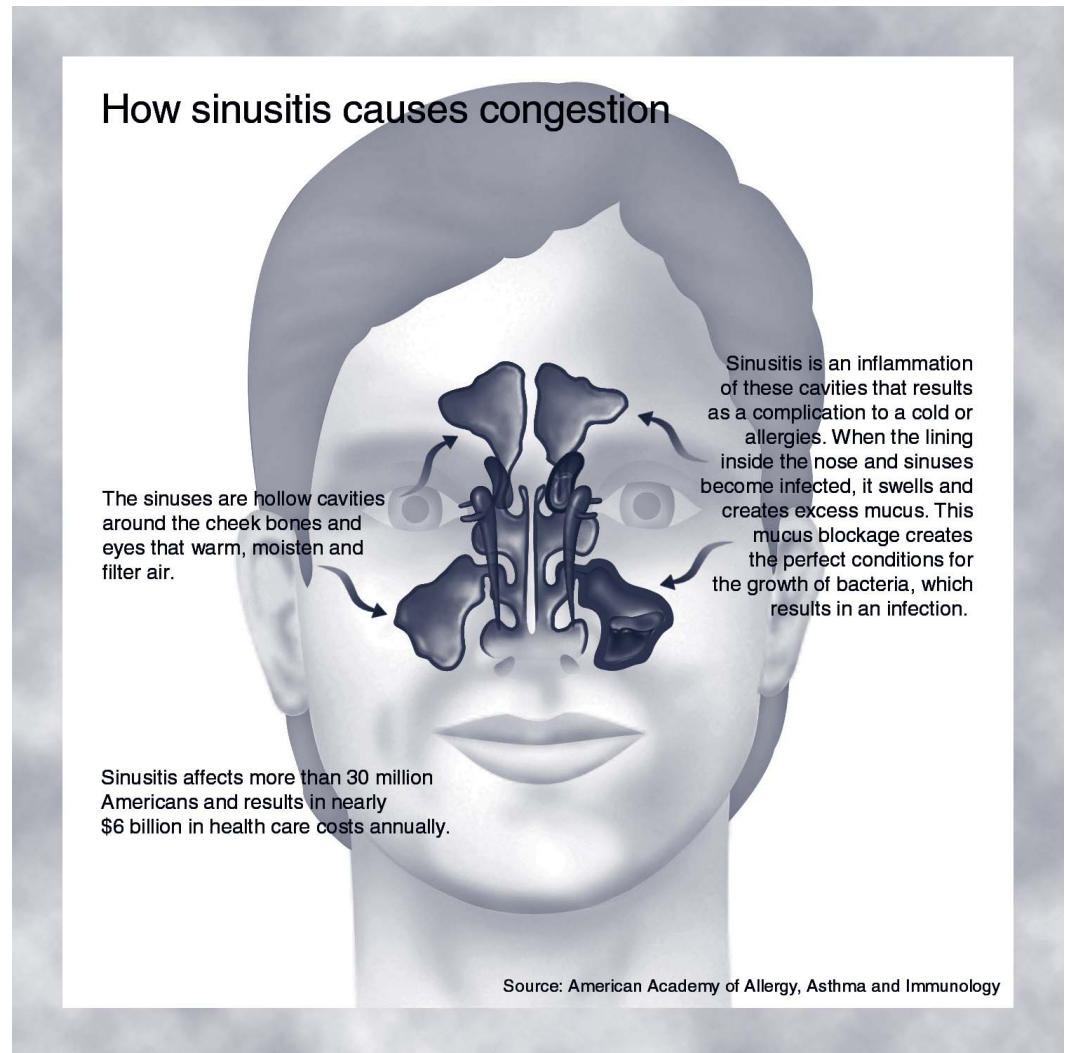
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How will my sinusitis be treated?

Some people may be tempted to use nose sprays they can buy in the drug store to help their sinusitis. These might make you feel better for a day or two, but after a few more days, they can make your nose feel more plugged and stuffy.

That's why you should talk to your doctor if you have sinusitis. Treating sinusitis can involve one or more of the following:

- Antibiotics: 10- to 14-days for acute sinusitis.
- Decongestants.
- Steroid nasal sprays.
- A salt-water or saline nasal wash.
- Treating underlying allergies (if there are underlying allergies) with medications and/or allergy shots.
- Surgery should be considered only if treatment from your doctor does not work, or if something is blocking the sinuses that cannot be fixed with medicine.

Several irritants can trigger symptoms of sinusitis, including cigarette smoke. If you have sinusitis, it is very important that you do not allow smoking in your home or car, and avoid smoky places.

An allergist/immunologist can answer other questions you might have about sinusitis. Visit www.aaaai.org for more educational materials on sinusitis.



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