

Sinusitis (Sinus Infection)



Overview

This condition is an inflammation and swelling of your sinuses. These are hollow, air-filled cavities in your skull. They open into your nasal passages. Sinusitis can be a painful condition. For some people, it can become a chronic problem.

Causes

A typical sinus infection begins as a common cold. Sinusitis can be caused by viral, bacterial or fungal infections. It can also be triggered by allergies or air pollutants. It can be caused by a wide variety of medical conditions involving your nose, your airways and your immune system.

Symptoms

Symptoms of sinusitis may include severe headaches centered in your face and forehead. You may have a stuffy nose, and pain in your ears, teeth and jaws. You may have thick discharges of yellowish or greenish mucus from your nose. You may have bad breath. You may also feel fatigued. If your sinusitis lasts for no more than thirty days, it is called "acute" sinusitis. If you experience symptoms for months at a time, and if your sinusitis recurs multiple times per year, this is called "chronic" sinusitis. Often, the symptoms of chronic sinusitis are a bit milder than those of acute sinusitis.

Treatment

Treatment options depend on the cause and severity of your sinusitis. If you have acute sinusitis, you may benefit from antibiotics and decongestants. Pain relievers and nasal sprays may be helpful. If your sinusitis is chronic, you may need a CT scan, MRI, nasal culture or endoscopic exam. You may benefit from a surgical procedure to correct a structural problem or blockage. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for your needs.

