

Benefits of surgery

1. Reduction in frequency, severity, and intensity of sinus infections.
2. Makes future sinus infections easier to treat
3. Improvement in ability to breathe through the nose.
4. Decreased frequency, severity, and duration of sinus pain, pressure, and headaches

Limitations of surgery

1. Surgery may not completely cure all sinus symptoms, and some patients may need continued medical or allergy therapy to keep symptoms under control. A very small percentage of patients get little/no relief from sinus surgery.
2. Although usually successful, surgery done on smokers is generally associated with slightly less successful outcomes than non-smokers. Therefore, surgical candidates are encouraged, but not required, to stop smoking two months prior to and two months after the surgical intervention.
3. A small percentage of patients, 5% or less, may need more than one surgery to achieve the desired result.

Risks of surgical intervention The risk of endoscopic sinus surgery is very low, but no surgery is completely risk-free.

The risks of endoscopic sinus surgery include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Anesthesia risk. Extremely rare, but we recommend you address any questions to the anesthesia team when you meet them on the day of surgery.
2. Risk of postoperative bleeding requiring nasal packing and/or surgery to control the bleeding.
3. Postoperative pain or headache.
4. Risk of permanent injury to the eye, including visual disturbance or blindness.
5. Risk of spinal fluid leak requiring surgical repair, and the associated risk of meningitis, brain abscess, or brain injury, and death.
6. Risk of change in, or loss of, sense of smell, either temporary or permanent.
7. Risk of scar formation requiring further surgery.
8. Risk of nasal septal perforation (a hole in the bone in the center of the nasal cavity).
9. Risk of slight change in voice.

Alternatives to surgery.

1. Continued efforts and non-surgical management of the sinus symptoms.
2. Obtain a second opinion regarding treatment options.

Acknowledgment

Your doctor thinks you're a good candidate for endoscopic sinus surgery, but you as a patient need to be comfortable with the decision to proceed. This is a non-life threatening problem, and there's no rush to operate. Please do not hesitate to clear up any reservations you or your family may have before we proceed with surgery.