

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - SINUSES

1. WHAT CAUSES SINUS PROBLEMS?

Most sinus sufferers have more than one underlying problem which predisposes them to their sinus symptoms. Usually, a combination of 2 or more of the following conditions are found in chronic sinus sufferers:

- **Allergy** Simple testing can rule this in or out as part of the problem.
- **Asthma** Patients with asthma can frequently develop the most difficult cases of chronic sinusitis.
- **Irritants** i.e. Smoke, or chemical fumes – these cause swelling in the nose and sinuses
- **Typical common cold** Also causes swelling of the nose and sinuses.
- **Family history** Many families have a predisposition for sinus trouble.
- **Abnormal Anatomy** i.e. A deviated septum or nasal polyps. Abnormalities like these can block normal sinus drainage pathways.

2. WHAT ARE SINUSES?

Sinuses are hollow, air-filled spaces of the bones of the face and head. There are 4 paired sets of sinuses, the maxillary, frontal, ethmoid and sphenoid sinuses. In simple terms, the sinuses are located around the eyes. The frontal sinuses are above the eyes, the ethmoid sinuses are between the eyes, the maxillary sinuses are under the eyes and the sphenoid sinuses are behind the eyes.

The sinus lining is referred to as the sinus mucosa. The mucosa produces mucous. The average person produces a quart of mucous a day from their sinuses. Sinuses that don't drain well, for whatever reason, become infected, or they develop pressure due to the obstruction. This is the basic process that causes sinus symptoms in most patients.

3. HOW COMMON ARE CHRONIC SINUS PROBLEMS?

Over thirty million Americans are known to be sinus sufferers.

4. WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH SINUS TROUBLE?

- Nasal congestion
- Runny nose
- Post nasal drip (mucous running down the back of the throat)
- Facial pressure or pain
- Eye pressure or pain

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Blocked ears
- Decrease in sense of taste and smell
- Cough
- Fever
- Dental pain

5. I'VE HAD SINUS SURGERY, AND I STILL HAVE PROBLEMS, CAN ANYTHING BE DONE?

Everyone is different but with the advanced techniques and innovative approaches used by our doctors to treat sinus problems, there is a very good chance we can get you some relief. People who have not done well with surgery should not give up, sometimes the solution to the problem is relatively simple.

6. IS SURGERY USUALLY NEEDED TO TREAT SINUS PROBLEMS?

Surgery is recommended in about 20% of our patients. However, surgery is almost always elective. In other words, if the patient does not choose to have surgery, other treatment methods are used. Obviously, if the doctor thinks there is a more serious problem, such as a dangerous sinus abscess, then surgery is the only option.

7. DOES MEDICAL INSURANCE COVER TESTING AND TREATMENT OF SINUS PROBLEMS?

All insurance plans are different, and you should check your policy, but the vast majority of testing and treatment used for sinus patients are usually covered by insurance.

8. IS THE EXAM OF MY NOSE AND SINUSES PAINFUL?

No one likes to go to the doctor. Our doctors do their very best to make the exam comfortable. There is usually very little discomfort.