

SINONASAL DISORDERS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What are sinuses?**

Sinuses are the air-filled spaces in the skull and face, around the nose.

What is sinusitis?

The sinuses are lined with mucosa, a very thin, moist, pink lining usually less than 1mm thick. If the mucosa becomes inflamed ("itis"), the condition is called "sinusitis."

What are the types of sinusitis ?

- ❖ **Acute sinusitis** - If sinusitis lasts less than 4 weeks
- ❖ **Subacute sinusitis** - If it lasts between 4 and 12 weeks
- ❖ **Chronic sinusitis** - If it lasts more than 12 weeks

Could frequent headaches be a sign of sinus disease?

There are many reasons for headaches, including stress. But if you have the following symptoms in addition to frequent, recurring headaches, you could have a sinus disease

- ❖ Worsening nasal obstruction lasting days or months
- ❖ Worsening thick and discolored nasal discharge
- ❖ Decreased sense of smell and taste
- ❖ Drainage down the back of the nose (post nasal drainage)
- ❖ Pain, tenderness and swelling around the eyes, cheeks, nose or forehead

What is a nasal polyp?

Polyps arise when the tissue lining the nose, called mucosa, becomes very inflamed and swollen. The normal mucosa, which is pink, moist, and 1 to 2 millimeters thick, can become swollen with fluids and proteins until it resembles a fluid-filled sac.

Why do polyps form?

Polyps form as a reaction to inflammation or allergy. In addition, patients with an inflammatory disease (not necessarily due to allergies) in the nose and sinuses may have polyps grow in the nose and sinus.

Why do I have problems with smell or taste perception with sinus disease?

When there are polyps filling about 50% or more of the nose, the air in the nasal cavity is blocked and does not reach the area where the smell nerves are located. When air and odours can't get to the nerve endings, then a person can't smell well, or may not smell anything at all – and therefore can't taste well, either, because much of our sense of taste is related to our sense of smell.

Is there any non surgical treatment for polyps?

The treatment for polyps depends on what is causing them, so it is very important to get a thorough evaluation of the polyps in order to obtain the best treatment. Before surgery, we may want to try:

Steroid Sprays Steroid sprays are prescribed for most types of nasal polyps, particularly mild polyps caused by allergic rhinitis (allergies to cats, dust, molds, pollens, trees, grasses and/or molds). They are also used for patients with medium and large polyps. Steroid sprays are helpful in shrinking polyps or slowing their natural growth.

Steroid Pills Steroid pills will cause a dramatic shrinkage of the polyps, but the effect is usually temporary – a few days or a few weeks. While the fluid in the polyp is dramatically reduced, the inflammatory cells and tissue remain; after stopping the steroids, the water returns to the polyps and they often return to their original size, if nothing else is

What are the other types of sinusitis?

- ❖ Allergic fungal sinusitis
- ❖ Fungal ball (also known as mycetoma of the sinuses)

There are two extremely rare types fungal sinusitis: Acute or chronic invasive fungal sinusitis.

Sometimes, fungal sinusitis is found in patients with immunocompromised systems (i.e. having diabetes or some other chronic illness).