

Sinusitis

Sinusitis is an inflammation of one or more of the sinuses, often occurring during an upper respiratory infection. It may also be a complication of tooth infection, allergy or certain infectious diseases, such as pneumonia. Many other causes of sinusitis include air pollution, diving and underwater swimming, sudden extremes of temperature and structural defects of the nose.

As the lining of the sinuses becomes inflamed and swollen, the openings that lead from each sinus into the nasal passages become partially or wholly blocked. The mucus that accumulates in the sealed-off sinus causes pressure on the sinus walls, resulting in discomfort, fever, pain and difficulty breathing, headache, and nasal discharge.

Treatment: steam inhalations and antihistamine nose drops may help to relieve the symptoms. A hot water bottle or warm, moist compresses may also help to relieve the symptoms of discomfort. Antibiotics may be necessary. Rest and sleep are recommended. Smoke, dust and other irritants to the nasal passages should be avoided.