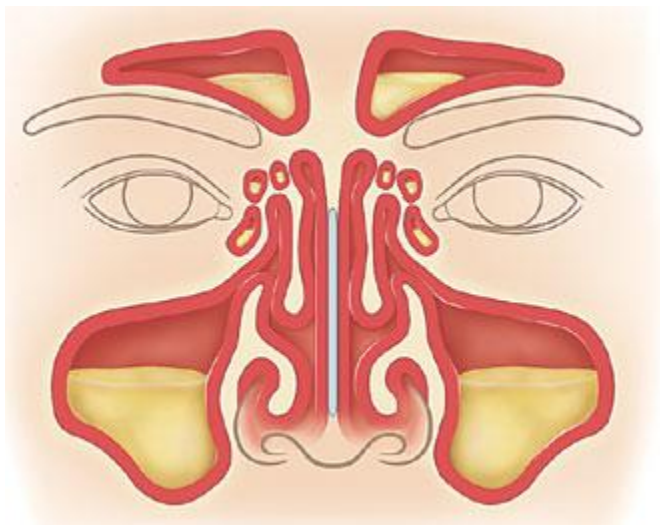


Acute Sinusitis

Acute sinusitis is a common problem and is often associated with a viral or bacterial upper respiratory infection that spreads to the sinuses.



The Effects of Acute Sinusitis

Sinuses are kept moist and clean by a lining of **mucosa**. When the mucosal lining is exposed to viruses, bacteria, pollen, smoke, or other irritants, it can become **inflamed** (swell up). The mucosa also makes more mucus and other fluids in order to help clear the sinus of the foreign particles. Too much mucus may cause the tiny hairlike **cilia** on top of the mucosa, which help transport mucus toward the opening of the sinus, to stop working temporarily. The sinus opening can become blocked, and the sinus cavity fills with fluid, producing deep pain and pressure.

Common Symptoms

- Facial pain
- Headache
- Fever
- Postnasal drip
- Nasal congestion
- Redness of skin over sinus

Diagnosis

A medical history and physical examination help your doctor diagnose sinusitis and determine what treatments might be helpful. A culture is sometimes taken to check for bacteria, while x-rays may be taken to find fluid in the sinuses.

Treatment

Treatment of acute sinusitis is designed to relieve blockage of the sinus opening and help the cilia work again. Antihistamines and decongestants can reduce inflammation and decrease fluid production. Bacteria can be treated with antibiotic medication. This medication should be taken until it is gone, even if you feel better.

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