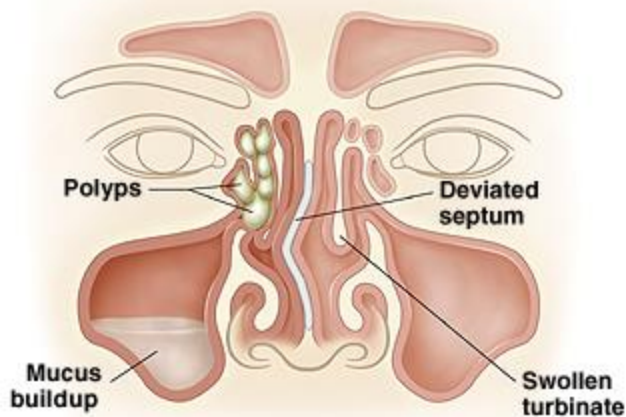


Understanding Sinus Problems



You don't often think about your sinuses until there's a problem. One day you realize you can't smell dinner cooking. Or you find you often have problems breathing through your nose.

Symptoms of Sinus Problems

Sinus problems can cause uncomfortable symptoms. Your nose may run constantly. You might have trouble sleeping at night. You may even lose your sense of smell. Other symptoms can include:

- Nasal congestion
- Fullness in ears
- Green, yellow, or bloody drainage from the nose
- Trouble tasting food
- Frequent headaches
- Facial pain
- Cough

When Sinuses Are Blocked

If something blocks the passages in the nose or sinuses, mucus can't drain. Mucus-filled sinuses often become infected.

- **Colds** cause the lining of the nose and sinuses to swell and make extra mucus. A buildup of mucus can lead to a more serious infection.
- **Allergies** irritate turbinates and other tissues. This causes swelling, which can cause a blockage. Over time, this irritation can also lead to polyps.

- **Polyps** (sacs of swollen tissue) may form in both the sinuses and nose. Polyps can grow large enough to clog nasal passages and block drainage.
- **A deviated (crooked) septum** may block nasal passages. This is often the result of an injury.

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