

Acute Sinusitis

Just when you thought your cold was over, the pressure and pain in your face and head sets in.

Sinusitis.

A cold's unfinished business.

Let's take a look at what happens, the causes, and how to care for yourself when you have sinusitis.

Sinusitis usually starts after a cold or allergies, which can cause swelling in the sinuses, the hollow spaces in the bones near your nose, cheeks, eyes, and forehead.

This swelling can block the sinuses, so fluid gets trapped.

This makes it a perfect place for viruses and bacteria to grow and cause an infection.

And the infection and swelling is what makes your face hurt.

Even your teeth can hurt.

And even though your cold may be gone, you can still have drainage and dripping from your nose or the back of your throat.

Most of the time sinusitis gets better on its own in about 1 to 2 weeks.

But while you wait and rest, you can try taking an over-the-counter pain medicine.

And you can try an over-the-counter corticosteroid spray for your nose.

Ask your care provider about using saline ... salt water ... washes to help open your nasal passages and wash out the mucus and bacteria.

To help with the pain, put a hot, wet towel or warm gel pack on your face 3 or 4 times a day for 5 to 10 minutes each time.

Put a thin cloth between the gel pack and your skin.

If you don't get better with rest and care, sometimes your care provider may prescribe antibiotics.

Acute Sinusitis

Keep taking them as directed, even if you feel better, until you've used up the recommended amount.

Watch for signs of any problems.

Call your doctor if you have a new or higher fever ...

redness or swelling in your face or around your eyes ...

new or worse pain ...

Or, if the drainage from your nose looks like pus or blood.

It takes a little time for sinusitis to go away.

It's okay to call your care provider if you have any questions.

Knowing more about sinusitis and what to watch for can help you feel better while you wait.