

Your Journey with Sinusitis



For more information scan this QR code or go to myhealth.alberta.ca/sinusitis-pathway

Sinusitis (sometimes called rhinosinusitis, meaning swollen sinuses) usually starts as a viral infection. Face pain and pressure, with a blocked nose are some of the symptoms of sinusitis. It is important to follow the management steps within this pathway, which can help you avoid sinusitis from getting worse.

You are the most important part of your healthcare team. This guide will help you to know what to expect as you work with your healthcare team to manage and treat sinusitis. If you have any questions along the way, please ask your team. Click on the page numbers in blue if you want more information about the step in your journey.

Before your appointment

- Write down how you feel, and your questions, symptoms, and concerns.
- Consider bringing a family member or friend to support you.



Visit your healthcare provider

- It is important to tell your healthcare provider when the symptoms began, so they can determine how to best support your health.
- Your healthcare provider will ask you questions about how you feel and what your symptoms are. Is your nose blocked? What colour is the mucus from your runny nose? Do you have pain or pressure around your nose and/or eyes? Is mucus draining down your throat? How is your ability to smell?
- Share all of your symptoms and concerns. Your health includes physical, emotional, spiritual, financial, and social elements.

Review your treatment & management options

- It is very important that you understand how to use the treatment options properly. Options may include saline rinses of your nose/sinuses, nasal sprays, and when/how often to take medication.
- Remember, there can be a lot of information to take in. Ask questions and make sure you are voicing your wishes on how you want your care managed.

Start your treatment & watch your symptoms

- Sinusitis can take several weeks, or even months, to get better once treatment begins.
- Be patient and be focused on the proper ways to perform saline rinsing and how to use nasal sprays.
- Take an active role in your treatment.
- Write down any changes in your symptoms.
- Ask what to watch for, and when to come back if your symptoms don't improve, or get worse.

Get your tests

If needed, your tests and assessments may include:

- Blood work
- CT scan - If your symptoms are not getting better after a prolonged time of proper management, you may need to have a CT scan (special X-ray) to see how swollen your sinuses are.
- A specialist may also need to look deep into your nose with a small camera on a flexible tube (endoscopy).

Review your test results

- Talk with your healthcare provider so you know what your test results mean and next steps.
- If you are sent for a CT scan, the results will help determine what treatment is recommended, which could include surgery.
- You may find some of your test results on MyHealth Records or MyAHS Connect (myhealth.alberta.ca/myhealthrecords).

Talk with your healthcare provider about a referral

- Your healthcare provider will know when it is time for you to see a specialist.
- Ask who you are being sent to and what they do.
- Ask how long it will take to be seen and what you should do if you don't hear back.

Keep taking care of yourself

- Keep taking care of your overall health.
- Look for other healthy lifestyle resources and supports.



Whole-person health

Important Tips:

Need a family doctor?

ahs.ca/findadoctor

Need a translator?

Let your healthcare provider know

Need health advice?

Call Health Link at 811

Need to find programs and services in your community?

Call 211 or visit ab.211.ca