

## Self Care - Sinusitis

### What is Sinusitis?

Sinusitis is inflammation (swelling) of the lining of the sinuses and often follows a common cold. It is sometimes caused by a viral or bacterial infection.

The sinuses are small, air-filled cavities behind your cheekbones and forehead . Sinusitis typically causes a high temperature, pain and tenderness in the face, and a blocked or runny nose. Sometimes you may get a headache. It is a common condition and can affect people of any age.

### Does it need any treatment?

Usually not. Sinusitis gets better by itself in two-thirds of cases. Over the counter painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen can help relieve the pain. These are available from your Pharmacist. Nasal decongestants have not been proven to help treat sinusitis and can sometimes make things worse. Antibiotics don't help in the majority of cases and are not routinely prescribed.

### How long does it last?

On average sinusitis takes between two to three weeks to clear, occasionally longer.

### When do I need to see a Doctor?

See your GP if your symptoms start to get worse after 5 days, or if you still have pain after two to three weeks.

Source NHS choices 1.9.11  
And MeReC Bullitin Volume 17 No3  
If you would like further advice contact NHS Direct on 08454647 or see [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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