

Children's Ear Nose & Throat Center

Sub-specialists of Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas

A member of the  Seton Healthcare Family

Phone (512) 324-2720 • Fax (512) 324-2724
After Hours (512) 458-1121

Sinusitis (Sinus Infection)

An infection in the sinuses caused by bacteria. The chances of getting a bacterial sinus infection may be influenced by a virus like a cold or other upper respiratory infections (URIs), allergies, and being around irritants and pollutants such as tobacco smoke. Smoke is very irritating especially for someone with sinusitis. Do not smoke or let anyone else smoke near a child with sinusitis. Keep smoke out of your home.

Symptoms of Sinusitis

- Cold or URI symptoms that do not get better after 10 days
- Stuffy and runny nose that may be thick or thin, or clear to green
- A cough that lasts a long time and may be worse at night
- Other things you may see are a low fever, sore throat, low energy, bad breath, a puffy face or eyes, and/or pain in the face, ear or teeth
- Colds may be like a sinus infection but usually start getting better by 10 days

Diagnosis of Sinusitis

- Sinus infections are usually diagnosed by cold symptoms that DO NOT get better after 10 days (see above for symptoms), and the child seems sicker than with a usual cold or URI
- The color of the nasal drainage does not tell the difference between a cold and a sinus infection

Treatment of Sinusitis

If it is decided that the child has a sinus infection and not a viral infection, antibiotics may be given. Medicine may be administered to reduce fever and may be given for the child's comfort. Cough medicine and decongestants are not usually recommended and should be used only when agreed on by the child's doctor/nurse.

You should feel free to call anytime you are worried and want to talk to your child's doctor or nurse.

Duration of Sickness

- Although your child may begin to improve in 1-3 days, some symptoms may last for several more weeks.
- Some children may need a change in antibiotics if they are not improving in 2-4 days.
- Every infection is different, so be sure to ask your doctor/nurse what to expect with your child and ask when to send your child back to daycare or school.