

# No More Drips



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Chronic sinusitis can make one's life miserable but a new procedure brings relief.

Is your nose congested? Are you finding it hard to breathe? Does thick mucus irritate the back of your throat? Do your face, head and teeth hurt from the pressure? Are you losing your sense of smell and taste? Are you incredibly tired and irritable?

You may think this is yet another cold or allergy attack. But if the symptoms last longer than 12 weeks, you might be suffering from chronic sinusitis. Though not

fatal in nature, chronic sinusitis is often more debilitating to a person's quality of life than congestive heart failure and chronic back pain.

## **What is sinusitis?**

Sinusitis is an inflammation of the sinus lining caused by bacterial, viral and/or microbial infections; as well as structural issues like blockages of the sinus opening (ostium). If the ostium is closed, normal mucus drainage may not occur, leading to infection and inflammation of the sinuses.

Sinusitis is usually preceded by a cold, allergy attack or irritation from environmental pollutants. The resulting symptoms — nasal pressure, nasal congestion, a “runny nose,” and fever — run their course in a few days. However, if symptoms persist, a bacterial infection or acute sinusitis may develop. If sinusitis occurs frequently or lasts three months or longer, it may lead to chronic sinusitis. In such cases, the mucous membranes of the nose, sinuses and throat become inflamed, possibly from pre-existing cold or allergies. Swelling obstructs the sinus openings and prevents normal mucus drainage, causing mucus and pressure to build up.

## **Treatment**

Chronic sinusitis is treated primarily using medication. Patients who do not respond to medication such as antibiotics, nasal steroids, or over-the-counter (OTC) drugs for more than 12 weeks may benefit from surgical intervention. The doctor will make that decision based on the symptoms, nasal endoscopy and on CT scanning of the Sinuses.

A breakthrough procedure, approved by the US FDA and Indian DCGI, called Balloon Sinuplasty is now available. Ensuring minimal bleeding and without cutting the normal structure, this procedure opens blocked sinus by restructuring the walls of the sinus passage. The procedure helps to drain mucus from the blocked sinus and restore normal sinus functioning.

Balloon Sinuplasty has a faster recovery time and provides long lasting results. Clinical data reveals that patients who underwent the Balloon Sinuplasty procedure reported significant improvement and relief from symptoms and did not have any recurrence even after two years. Additionally, patients who do not get relief even after undergoing conventional surgical treatment can also try Balloon Sinuplasty.

## **Symptoms**

Discharge from the nose or down the back of the throat

Nasal obstruction or congestion

Tenderness and swelling around the eyes cheeks, nose and forehead

A reduced sense of smell and taste

Throbbing facial pain or headaches

Irritability and fatigue

### **Case study**

Gautam (35) had been suffering from chronic forehead pain, nasal blockage and thick mucus dripping into his throat for about two years. He had been on a variety of nasal sprays and medicines, but these didn't help. A CT scan of his sinuses confirmed that the openings of his frontal sinuses were blocked due to chronic sinusitis. The only option was to open the sinus openings and restore the functioning of his sinuses. He opted to have this done through endoscopic balloon sinuplasty rather than endoscopic sinus surgery as it is minimally invasive and recovery would be quicker. Gautam was discharged the same evening and four weeks later his headaches were 70 per cent better.