

Sinus Infection

Brief Version

What is a sinus infection?

Bacteria cause sinus infections. Your child may have a sinus infection when there is:

- Face pain.
- Swelling of the skin on the face.
- Yellow/green discharge from the nose that lasts more than 14 days.
- Fever.

How can I take care of my child?

- **Your child needs an antibiotic.**

Give your child the medicine ordered by your doctor. This medicine will kill the germs that cause the infection.

Your child's antibiotic is _____. Give _____, _____ times a day by mouth. Give it while your child is awake for _____ days.

- **Give your child nasal washes.**

Put several drops of warm water or saline nose drops in your child's nose. You can get saline nose drops at the drug store. Never use a glass dropper for nose drops. Use a rounded suction bulb. Gently suction mucus out of your child's nose.

Suction mucus at least 4 times a day and whenever your child cannot breathe through the nose.

- **You can use decongestant nose drops or spray.**

If your child's sinuses are still blocked, use decongestant nose drops or sprays.

- Do not use such nose drops with children under age 6 unless your doctor tells you to do so.
- If your child is age 6 or over, use 1 drop or spray per side. Give the drops 2 times a day.
- If your child is age 12 or over, use 2 drops or sprays per side. Do this 2 times a day.

Have your child use the nose drops for the first 2 or 3 days. Do not use these drops or sprays for more than 5 days. When you use these drops longer than 5 days, it can cause more problems.

- **Give pain medicine.**

Give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) for fever over 102°F (39°C) or to stop pain. No aspirin.

- **Use antihistamines.**

If your child also has hay fever, give him allergy medicine.

Call your child's doctor right away if:

- Your child's cheeks, eyelids, or forehead are red or swollen.
- Your child starts to act very sick.

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Call your child's doctor during office hours if:

- The fever or pain is not gone 48 hours after your child starts to take the medicine.
- You have other questions or concerns.

Written by B.D. Schmitt, M.D., author of "Your Child's Health," Bantam Books.

This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.