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Interaction

STAR CAST

PONNIYIN

SELVAN II

A Diplomat's Diary

**BRAZILIAN
AMBASSADOR**

**HE ANDRÉ
ARANHA
CORRÊA DO
LAGO**

**Fashion
Extravaganza**

**LFW IN
PARTNERSHIP
WITH FDCI**

**Celebrating
Guru Shishya
Parampara
NATYA
TARANGINI**

**CELEBRATING
20 YEARS**

**KAPIL DEV'S
KHUSHI
FOUNDATION**

**Science Museums
and Attractions
PHILADELPHIA**

**Project - London
Aquatics Centre
ZAHA HADID**

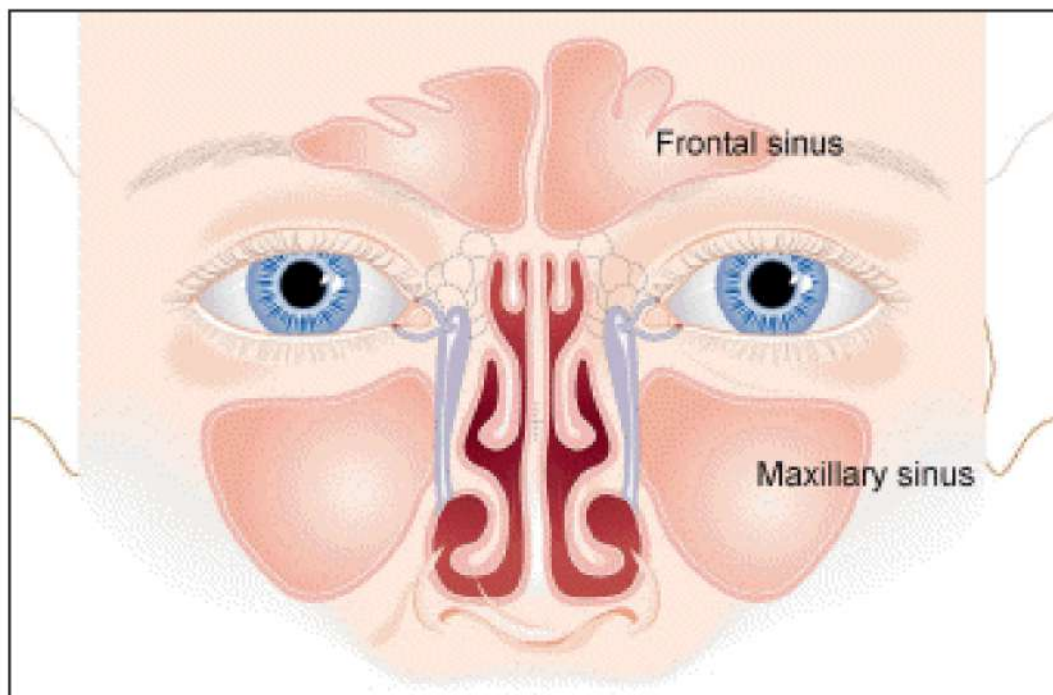
Bond Beyond Measure
Meet Vikas
the Son of
Bindu Khanna

Health

Sinusitis: Causes Symptoms & Treatment

Paranasal sinuses are vital air spaces which are present around the nose and play an integral part in breathing and humidification of air. They also produce mucus which helps to trap various particles (including harmful microorganisms) and thereby serve a protective function.

There are 4 main groups of paranasal sinuses. The frontal sinus located just above the nose, the ethmoid sinus located in the upper part of the nose, the sphenoid sinus



in the region behind the nose and the maxillary sinus located in the cheek region. These sinuses are named based on the bone in which they are present.

Mucus drains through these sinuses in a particular pattern which helps to keep the nasal cavity and surrounding region healthy.

A blockage in the mucus drainage pathway can result in stagnation of secretions in the sinus cavity. This can then lead to infection and result in inflammation in the paranasal sinuses. Inflammation of the sinuses is known as sinusitis.



Sinusitis can be acute or chronic in nature

Acute sinusitis usually occurs secondary to an infection in the nose and results in symptoms such as facial pain (area of pain depends on the sinus affected) which is often worse on bending down, thick nasal discharge, nasal congestion, post nasal drip, fever and sometimes a reduced sense of smell. Symptoms usually last for a week to 10 days and antibiotics, antihistamines, analgesics, steam inhalation and nasal irrigation are usually sufficient to treat the condition.

Chronic sinusitis refers to long standing inflammation in the sinuses with symptoms such as facial pain or pressure, post nasal drip, loss of smell, nasal block or discharge lasting for more than 3 months. This occurs usually due to an anatomical problem (for example, Deviated nasal septum or nasal polyps) which obstructs the sinus drainage

pathway. To evaluate this, first a diagnostic nasal endoscopy is performed in an ENT specialist's clinic to fully visualise the nasal cavity and look for signs of infection or anatomical obstruction. Maximal medical treatment is then started which usually includes a topical nasal steroid spray, anti histamine tablet and nasal saline irrigation for 1 month. Some practitioners also prefer to start a course of oral antibiotics. In case there is no relief in the symptoms, a CT scan of the nose and paranasal sinuses is done which shows the extent of the disease and also helps to plan for surgery. Following this, functional endoscopic sinus surgery (FESS) is required to clear the disease from the sinuses while preserving the normal anatomical structures and without harming the natural sinus drainage pathway.

Sinusitis is a common condition which causes various troublesome symptoms and significantly impacts the quality of your life.

However, it can be effectively managed by a good ENT specialist through both medical and surgical means. So if you are suffering from any sinus related symptoms, do visit your ENT doctor to get the appropriate treatment and thereby return to your normal state of health.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Founder of THE FACE CENTRE, Medical-Aesthetic Clinic is the Aesthetic Practitioner, ENT & Hair transplant surgeon. Sardesai was awarded a Gold Medal for being the best ENT surgeon of the year 2023. He has also presented multiple research papers and posters at both the state as well as at national level conferences