



Patient & Family Guide  
2021

# Endoscopic Sinus Surgery



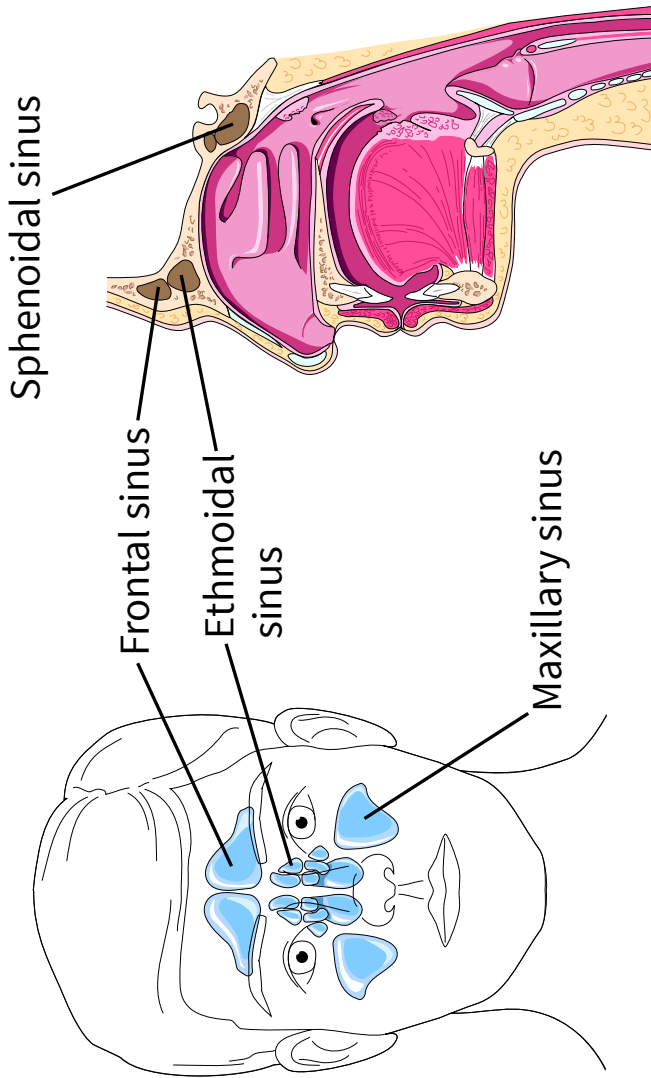
[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

# Endoscopic Sinus Surgery

The sinuses are cavities (spaces) in the bones of the face and head. They have a lining that makes mucus. They can get inflamed (red and swollen) for many reasons. This can lead to nasal blockage (blocked nose), loss of smell, and sometimes pain. Surgery may be needed if medical treatment does not help the problem.

## What is endoscopic sinus surgery?

- Endoscopic sinus surgery involves taking out polyps (tissue growths) and mucus or pus. It unblocks the natural openings so the sinuses can drain.
- Sometimes endoscopic sinus surgery may be needed to remove masses or tumours in the nose and/or sinuses.



## How do I get ready for surgery?

### The week before surgery:

- Stop taking ASAs (such as Aspirin®) and similar medications. If you are not sure, ask your nurse or doctor.

# What happens after the surgery?

## Right after surgery:

- You will be taken to the recovery room, where a nurse will check the back of your throat.
- You may have swallowed blood during and after your surgery. You may vomit (throw up) old blood. If you feel sick to your stomach, ask the nurse for medication.
- You may have a headache or pain in your nose. The medication ordered by your doctor for pain can be given to you every 4 hours. Ask your nurse for medication, if needed.
- You may have an ice pack to relieve discomfort.
- Your intravenous (IV) will be taken out when you are drinking well and not feeling sick to your stomach.
- Ring your call bell for a nurse before you get up for the first time. You may still be drowsy.
- The packing is usually taken out before you go home, or on the morning after your surgery. You will be asked to rest for 30 minutes after the packing is taken out. You will then be able to go home if there is no bleeding.

## At home

### Safety

You must have a responsible adult take you home. You must not take a taxi or bus home alone.

### Discomfort

- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) as needed. Do not take ASAs (such as Aspirin®) or other anti-inflammatory drugs.
- Your doctor may give you a prescription for pain pills. You can buy Tylenol® or Tylenol® Extra Strength at your drugstore without a prescription.
- **Do not drink alcohol while taking pain pills.**

### For 7 to 10 days after surgery, avoid:

- › injury to your nose.
- › straining while going to the bathroom. Stool softeners may be helpful.
- › violent sneezing. Sneeze or cough with your mouth open.
- › blowing your nose.
- › overheating (from sunbathing or hot baths).
- › picking or rubbing your nose.
- › strenuous (hard) work.
- › sex.

Check with your doctor at your follow-up visit about these activities.

## **Tips**

- Use a gentle saline (salt water) nasal wash twice a day.
- Use the ointment, drops, or nasal spray you were given as instructed.
- Use more ointment or drops if you have severe (very bad) crusting and blockage.
- You may have bad breath and a strange taste in your mouth. This can be caused by post-nasal discharge and mouth breathing. Brushing your teeth and using mouthwash will help.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Sleep with your head elevated (raised up) on pillows to lessen stuffiness and help your breathing.
- Tell your doctor about any unusual pain, swelling, tenderness, or high fever.

## **Bleeding**

If bleeding happens, lean forward while sitting comfortably. Firmly press both nostrils together. Hold for 5 minutes. If bleeding does not stop, call your doctor.

**Call your surgeon right away, or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have any of the following:**

- A rare complication of this surgery is leakage of fluid from around the brain through the nose. When this leakage is dropped on a paper towel, it may be clear or mixed with blood. The blood stays in the centre surrounded by clear fluid. The drainage may get worse with straining. This may happen 1 to 4 weeks after surgery.
  - › You may notice a salty taste if this drainage happens.
- Headache that gets worse when you stand up
- Double vision
- Bulging of an eye

**What are your questions?**

**Please ask. We are here to help you.**

