

SINUS HEADACHE

Whether the symptoms of headache are due to sinus disease should be determined through an examination by a physician.

The headache of sinus origin or acute sinusitis is usually associated with constant pain and tenderness over the affected sinus, a deep dull ache, and exaggerated by head movements or straining. Nasal symptoms are prominent, including sinus pain which is usually accompanied by other symptoms of sinus disease such as nasal discharge, ear sensations or fullness, and facial swelling. Allergic reactions and tumors in the sinuses also can produce inflammation, swelling, and blockage of the sinuses. However, vascular headaches can cause similar symptoms. The vast majority of people who think they are experiencing "sinus" problems are actually suffering from a vascular type of headache. When sinus disease is the cause of the headache, an accompanying fever is often present, and x-rays or a sinus CT scan will indicate some sinus blockage. One or both nostrils are blocked and the pain extends over the cheek or forehead. The area is tender to the touch.

Therapy is usually directed toward relief of infection or accompanying allergy. Symptomatic relief includes analgesics and nasal vasoconstrictors. The use of local corticosteroids may offer the allergic individual added relief where nasal symptoms are prominent. Therapy of the symptomatic type is similar in both cases where sinus and nasal symptoms are prominent, but the acute sinusitis requires the added therapy directed toward the offending organism or allergy. The migrainous individual requires the added therapy directed toward the basic migraine disorder.

