

Title: Chronic sinusitis & allergies

Author: Nicholas Kim

Date: Nov 29, 2009

Key words: Chronic rhinosinusitis, chronic sinusitis, allergies, allergy testing

Abstract: Computed tomography (CT) scanning has been the standard test for diagnosing chronic sinusitis in adults. However, there is recent evidence to show that allergy testing is a better test for diagnosis and a more appropriate test for planning future treatment.

This document was created by a medical student enrolled in the Primary Care Clerkship at the University of Minnesota Medical School as part of the course project. The aim of the project is to present information on a medical topic in the format of a patient education handout. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Minnesota Medical School physicians and faculty. These materials are provided for informational purposes only and are in no way intended to take the place of the advice and recommendations of your personal health care provider. The information provided may no longer be up to date since it has not been reviewed since the date of creation. The information provided should not be used to diagnose a health problem or disease, or as a means of determining treatment. In the event of a medical emergency, immediately contact a doctor or call 911.

## What can I do for my allergies now?

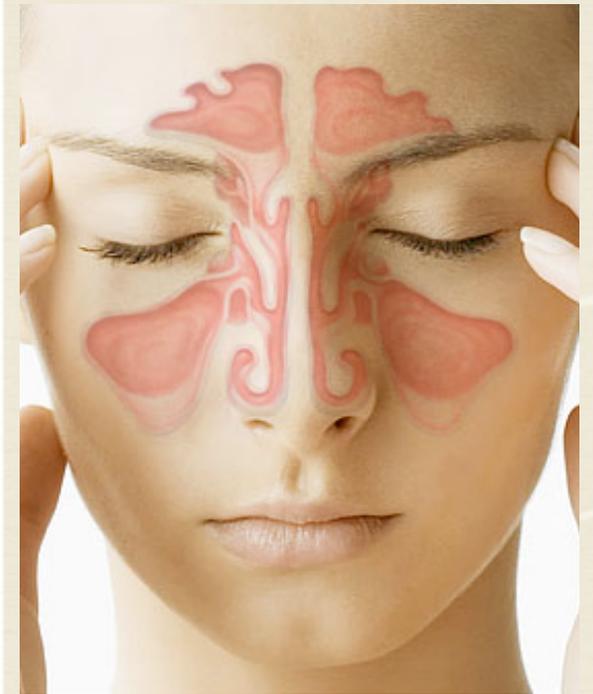
Over-the-counter oral antihistamines and over-the-counter decongestant nasal sprays may help with temporary relief of allergy symptoms that lead to chronic sinusitis.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before starting these medications to avoid any side effect.



NICHOLAS KIM  
Medical Student  
University of Minnesota Medical School

## CHRONIC SINUSITIS & ALLERGIES



# WHAT CAUSES CHRONIC SINUSITIS?

Allergies such as hay fever are the leading cause of chronic sinusitis in adults.

Inflammation that occurs with allergies may block your sinuses.

If your doctor suspects that your chronic sinusitis is brought on by allergies, an allergy skin test may be recommended.



## What is chronic sinusitis?

Chronic sinusitis is persistent inflammation and swelling of the cavities surrounding the nasal passageways. This may interfere with drainage and cause mucus to build up.

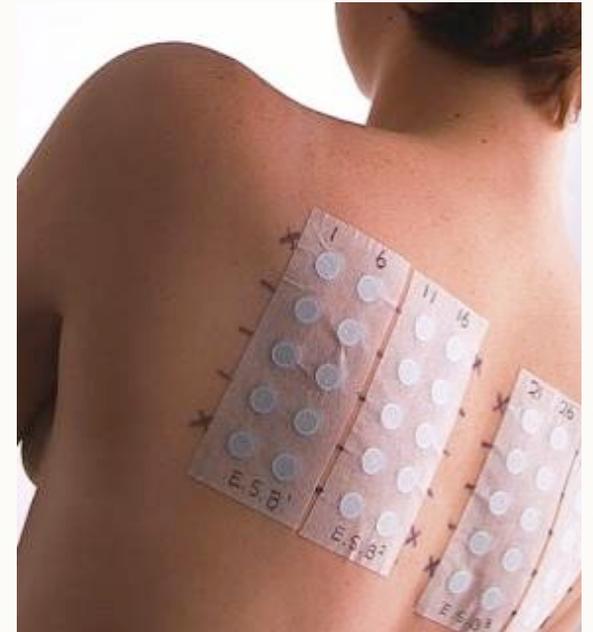
If you have chronic sinusitis, you may experience persistent:

- Difficulty breathing through your nose
- Swelling around the eyes and cheeks
- Throbbing facial pain or headache

Unlike with acute sinusitis, fever is not a common symptom of chronic sinusitis.

## Allergy testing

An allergy skin test is a safe and quick way to pinpoint the allergen that is responsible for your nasal flare-ups.



## Immunotherapy

Allergy shots may help treat your chronic sinusitis by reducing the body's reaction to specific allergens.

