



Allergies - Headache - Eye Pain - Conjunctivitis

The Following Information has been Prepared for You:

Acute sinusitis can cause pain & pressure around the eyes or behind the eyes, forehead and cheeks. Light sensitivity, blurred vision, loss of side vision, watery eyes, headache, ear-ache, sinus drainage & scratchy throat may also occur with sinusitis. When the sinuses are inflamed, the eyes can have a dull aching, throbbing, and bulging sensation and be particularly light-sensitive. It may be very uncomfortable to wear contact lenses during this time. Sinusitis can cause the eyes to also get dry and have a reddish tinge or glassy appearance. Sinus medications may clear sinuses, but may also make ocular dryness worse.

Allergies to environmental factors can directly affect the eyes, causing allergic conjunctivitis. Symptoms include redness, swelling, stringy mucus, itching, foreign body sensation, and light sensitivity.

Some patients may exhibit signs of either sinusitis or allergic conjunctivitis, while others have both conditions.

TREATMENT:

Sinusitis is typically caused by allergies to environmental factors. You will need to determine the items you are allergic to. See an allergist for testing. Then, you can work on avoiding those items or your allergist can help you overcome your sensitivity to them.

Pets, smoke, dust mites, fungal spores and pollens or regular offenders. To make your home (and vehicle!) safer, it is advised to avoid cloth furniture, carpeting or rugs, or shampoo items regularly. Keep pets away from the bedrooms and main living areas. Purchase air purifiers and use allergen-reducing air conditioning filters that are replaced monthly. Wash bedding / curtains regularly. Replace old pillows or old cloth-covered furniture. Avoid sleeping with stuffed animals. Shower and wash hair before bed, to remove pollens that get entrapped. Cover mattresses and pillows with plastic allergen barriers. Regularly toss pillows, blankets, stuffed animals in the dryer on high heat for 30 minutes to remove allergens. Remove dust from furniture, mop floors, steam clean carpets & bathe indoor pets. Keep windows in home and vehicle closed to avoid excess pollens / dust entering. Remove shoes at the doorway. Avoid smoking in the home. Avoid going outdoors when the pollen counts are high, and adjust the air conditioning of your vehicle to recycle internal air rather than pull air from outside. Carefully check your home for water leaks or moisture build-up that may cause black fungus to grow. Remove house plants.

If you have allergies to pollens, eat one tablespoon of honey harvested locally daily, or add "bee pollen" to your food - this will help you build up a stronger tolerance to pollens.

Use of warm moist compresses such as Bruder Compresses, humidifiers, warm showers, sinus wash devices, and menthol products such as Boroleum and Vick's Salve may be comforting. Chicken soup & warm drinks are soothing. Cold compresses may also be helpful. You may find alternating hot and cold compresses to be the best treatment. However, if your eyes are swollen and red, you should only use cold compress on them, since heat may exacerbate swelling / redness.

Over-the-counter oral antihistamine & decongestant medications can be used per package directions. If you have high blood pressure, be sure to choose decongestants that are labelled as safe to use for hypertension. You may ask your pharmacist about these if you do not see them. In my experience, they are usually placed on the bottom shelf, or under the rest of the decongestants.

You may be prescribed an oral antibiotic to treat the infection. Use the full course of the antibiotic. Even if you start to feel better, you should not stop an antibiotic use before the treatment period is complete. If you tend to experience yeast infections or thrush due to antibiotic use, your doctor may also prescribe an oral anti-yeast medication.

Steroid nasal sprays or sinus rinses can be helpful.

Topical antihistamine eye drops such as Patanol or Pataday can be used on the eyes for allergic conjunctivitis.

Lumify redness relief eye drops can quickly remove redness, but should be used in moderation.

Occasionally prescription steroid eye drops will be required.

You may alternate Tylenol and Advil (Aleve or Ibuprofen) every 4-6 hours for pain control.

Sunglasses are recommended for light sensitivity.

Avoid wearing contact lenses while you are ill.

Consider allergy testing and treatments if you have repeated attacks of sinusitis.

If additional symptoms develop, such as chest pain, cough, vomiting, etc. please contact your doctor. If symptoms do not resolve after the course of treatment, also contact your doctor. Some sinus infections may require two rounds of antibiotic or further testing for possible fungal etiology.

Please Rate the Information You Received

	☐ Very helpful - all questions are answered ☐ Somewhat helpful - I still have questions ☐ Not helpful – none of my questions were answered
Comments / Questions / Typos:	

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