



Cold vs. sinus infection

The common cold can be miserable. But if symptoms linger, you could be dealing with a sinus infection. Learn the differences so you can get the right treatment.

From sniffles to sinusitis

Sinusitis, commonly known as a sinus infection, occurs when mucus buildup causes inflammation. It can be triggered by:

Viruses
(like a common cold)

Bacteria

**Allergies
or Asthma**

Sinus infections can be hard to recognize, as they share many symptoms with the common cold:

Headache

Fever

Cough

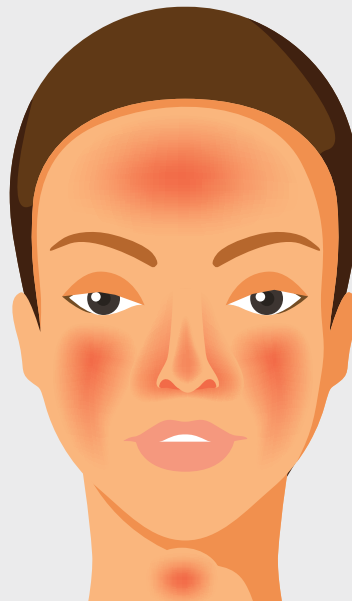
Sore throat

Fatigue

Runny, stuffy nose

Swollen sinuses

Mucus buildup



What's the difference?

Cold symptoms

The symptoms of a common cold will usually improve within 10-14 days.

Sinusitis symptoms

The biggest indicator of sinusitis is that symptoms fail to improve within 10-14 days. Other signs of sinusitis are:



Initial improvement, followed by acute worsening



High fever with worsening of symptoms



Pressure behind the eyes, cheeks, forehead or teeth



Yellow, green or gray mucus

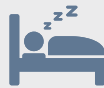
Treatment options

Antibiotics can't help a cold. But your doctor may have prescription medication recommendations for sinusitis.

Cold



Fluids



Rest



Over-the-counter medication

Sinusitis

In most cases, sinusitis goes away on its own. But always consult your doctor with any questions or concerns.



From the expert

"A sinus infection looks a lot like a cold, but it lasts longer. Do your best to stay healthy by frequently washing your hands."



— Dr. Matthew Messoline, family medicine doctor with Sharp Rees-Stealy Medical Group