

 **COMPLIMENTARY COPY
TAKE ONE HOME**

WebMD®

FOCUS ON

FALL 2024

A LOOK INSIDE:

**EXPLORE THE
NASAL CAVITY**
PAGE 12

FIRST PERSON:

**MY LIFE WITH
NASAL POLYPS**
PAGE 14

QUIZ:

**TAKE OUR
TRUE/FALSE TEST**
PAGE 23

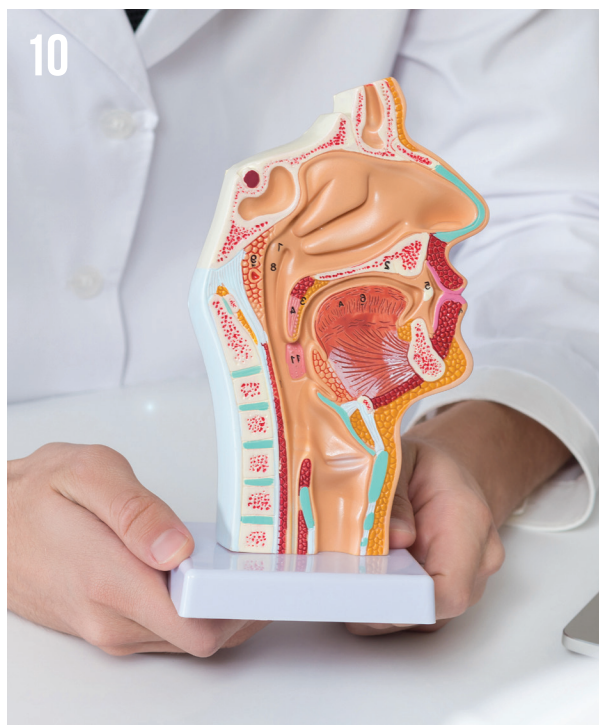
 **SCAN ME**

**Access this
content online.** Use
your smartphone
camera to activate
the QR code.



CONTENTS

- 07 NEWS**
The latest research
- 08 BY THE NUMBERS**
Stats and facts
- 09 YOUR TEAM**
Specialists who can help
- 10 NASAL POLYPS 101**
Causes, symptoms, and diagnosis
- 12 A LOOK INSIDE**
Explore the nasal cavity
- 14 FIRST PERSON**
My life with nasal polyps



WebMD Focus On is not responsible for advertising claims. *WebMD Focus On* (ISSN 1553-9946) is published by WebMD LLC and may not be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission of WebMD LLC. All rights reserved. All editorial content is reviewed by our board-certified physicians, is for informational purposes only, and is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. WebMD does not endorse any specific product, service, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your health care provider with any questions regarding a medical condition and never disregard professional medical advice or delay seeking it because of something you have read in a WebMD publication. If you think you have a medical emergency, call your doctor or 911 immediately. 2024 WebMD LLC. All rights reserved.



16 TREATMENT SMARTS

Improve your quality of life now

17 GOOD TO KNOW

Unexpected effects of nasal polyps

18 HEALTH SMARTS

Are nasal polyps related to aspirin sensitivity?

19 FIND SUPPORT

Taking care of you

20 LIVING HEALTHY

Tips for a good night's rest

22 CARING FOR YOU

Medications and other therapies for managing your condition

23 QUIZ

Take our true/false test



DUPIXENT[®] 
(dupilumab) Injection 300mg

THE NON-SURGICAL TREATMENT THAT HELPS YOU:

DU MORE FROM SCRATCH
WITH LESS
NASAL POLYPS

- REDUCES CONGESTION AND NASAL POLYP SIZE
- CAN IMPROVE SENSE OF SMELL IN AS LITTLE AS 3 DAYS
- CAN REDUCE ORAL STEROID USE*
- IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO SURGERY

*Don't stop taking your corticosteroid medicines unless instructed by your doctor.

Ask your doctor how **DUPIXENT** can help you **DU MORE** with less nasal polyps.

sanofi | REGENERON[®]

©2024 Sanofi and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
All Rights Reserved. US.DUP.24.05.0100 06/2024
DUPIXENT[®] is a registered trademark of Sanofi Biotechnology.

INDICATION

DUPIXENT is a prescription medicine used with other medicines for the maintenance treatment of chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyposis (CRSwNP) in adults whose disease is not controlled. It is not known if DUPIXENT is safe and effective in children with chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyposis under 18 years of age.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

Do not use if you are allergic to dupilumab or to any of the ingredients in DUPIXENT.

Before using DUPIXENT, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- have eye problems.
- have a parasitic (helminth) infection.
- are scheduled to receive any vaccinations. You should not receive a “live vaccine” right before and during treatment with DUPIXENT.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known whether DUPIXENT will harm your unborn baby.
 - A pregnancy registry for women who take DUPIXENT during pregnancy collects information about the health of you and your baby. To enroll or get more information call 1-877-311-8972 or go to <https://mothertobaby.org/ongoing-study/dupixent/>.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known whether DUPIXENT passes into your breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal supplements.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you are taking oral, topical, or inhaled corticosteroid medicines or if you have CRSwNP and asthma and use an asthma medicine. **Do not** change or stop your corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine without talking to your healthcare provider. This may cause other symptoms that were controlled by the corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine to come back.

DUPIXENT can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Allergic reactions.** DUPIXENT can cause allergic reactions that can sometimes be severe. Stop using DUPIXENT and tell your healthcare provider or get emergency help right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms: breathing problems or wheezing, swelling of the face, lips, mouth, tongue, or throat, fainting, dizziness, feeling lightheaded, fast pulse, fever, hives, joint pain, general ill feeling, itching, skin rash, swollen lymph nodes, nausea or vomiting, or cramps in your stomach-area.
- **Eye problems.** Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new or worsening eye problems, including eye pain or changes in vision, such as blurred vision. Your healthcare provider may send you to an ophthalmologist for an eye exam if needed.
- **Inflammation of your blood vessels.** Rarely, this can happen in people with asthma who receive DUPIXENT. This may happen in people who also take a steroid medicine by mouth that is being stopped or the dose is being lowered. It is not known whether this is caused by DUPIXENT. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have: rash, chest pain, worsening shortness of breath, or a feeling of pins and needles or numbness of your arms or legs, or persistent fever.
- **Joint aches and pain.** Some people who use DUPIXENT have had trouble walking or moving due to their joint symptoms, and in some cases needed to be hospitalized. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or worsening joint symptoms. Your healthcare provider may stop DUPIXENT if you develop joint symptoms.

The most common side effects in patients with chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyposis include injection site reactions, eye and eyelid inflammation, including redness, swelling, and itching, sometimes with blurred vision, high count of a certain white blood cell (eosinophilia), trouble sleeping (insomnia), toothache, gastritis and joint pain (arthralgia).

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of DUPIXENT. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Use DUPIXENT exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider. It's an injection given under the skin (subcutaneous injection). Your healthcare provider will decide if you or your caregiver can inject DUPIXENT. **Do not** try to prepare and inject DUPIXENT until you or your caregiver have been trained by your healthcare provider.

Please see accompanying Brief Summary of Important Patient Information.

Brief Summary of Important Patient Information
about DUPIXENT® (dupilumab) (DU-pix-ent)
injection, for subcutaneous use

Rx Only

What is DUPIXENT?

- DUPIXENT is a prescription medicine used:
 - with other medicines for the maintenance treatment of chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyposis (CRSwNP) in adults whose disease is not controlled.
- DUPIXENT works by blocking two proteins that contribute to a type of inflammation that plays a major role in chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyposis.
- It is not known if DUPIXENT is safe and effective in children with chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyposis under 18 years of age.

Who should not use DUPIXENT?

Do not use DUPIXENT if you are allergic to dupilumab or to any of the ingredients in DUPIXENT. See the end of this summary of information for a complete list of ingredients in DUPIXENT.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using DUPIXENT?

Before using DUPIXENT, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- have eye problems.
- have a parasitic (helminth) infection
- are scheduled to receive any vaccinations. You should not receive a “live vaccine” right before and during treatment with DUPIXENT.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known whether DUPIXENT will harm your unborn baby.
 - **Pregnancy Exposure Registry.** There is a pregnancy exposure registry for women who take DUPIXENT during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Your healthcare provider can enroll you in this registry. You may also enroll yourself or get more information about the registry by calling 1-877-311-8972 or going to <https://mothertobaby.org/ongoing-study/dupixent/>.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known whether DUPIXENT passes into your breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all of the medicines you take including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you:

- are taking oral, topical, or inhaled corticosteroid medicines
- have asthma and use an asthma medicine
- have CRSwNP, and also have asthma

Do not change or stop your corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine without talking to your healthcare provider. This may cause other symptoms that were controlled by the corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine to come back.

How should I use DUPIXENT?

- **See the detailed “Instructions for Use” that comes with DUPIXENT for information on how to prepare and inject DUPIXENT and how to properly store and throw away (dispose of) used DUPIXENT pre-filled syringes and pre-filled pens.**
- Use DUPIXENT exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
- Your healthcare provider will tell you how much DUPIXENT to inject and how often to inject it.
- DUPIXENT comes as a single-dose pre-filled syringe with needle shield or as a pre-filled pen.
- DUPIXENT is given as an injection under the skin (subcutaneous injection).
- If your healthcare provider decides that you or a caregiver can give the injections of DUPIXENT, you or your caregiver should receive training on the right way to prepare and inject DUPIXENT. **Do not** try to inject DUPIXENT until you have been shown the right way by your healthcare provider.
- **If you miss a dose of DUPIXENT**, give the injection within 7 days from the missed dose, then continue with your original schedule. If the missed dose is not given within 7 days, wait until the next scheduled dose to give your DUPIXENT injection.
- If you inject too much DUPIXENT, call your healthcare provider or Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.
- Your healthcare provider may prescribe other medicines to use with DUPIXENT. Use the other prescribed medicines exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to.

What are the possible side effects of DUPIXENT?

DUPIXENT can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Allergic reactions. DUPIXENT can cause allergic reactions that can sometimes be severe.** Stop using DUPIXENT and tell your healthcare provider or get emergency help right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms: breathing problems or wheezing, fast pulse, fever, general ill feeling, swollen lymph nodes, swelling of the face, lips, mouth, tongue, or throat, hives, itching, nausea or vomiting, fainting, dizziness, feeling lightheaded, joint pain, skin rash, or cramps in your stomach-area.
- **Eye problems.** Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new or worsening eye problems, including eye pain or changes in vision, such as blurred vision. Your healthcare provider may send you to an ophthalmologist for an eye exam if needed.
- **Inflammation in your blood vessels:** Rarely, this can happen in people with asthma who receive DUPIXENT. This may happen in people who also take a steroid medicine by mouth that is being stopped or the dose is being lowered. It is not known whether this is caused by DUPIXENT. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have: rash, worsening shortness of breath, persistent fever, chest pain, or a feeling of pins and needles or numbness of your arms or legs.
- **Joint aches and pain.** Joint aches and pain can happen in people who use DUPIXENT. Some people have had trouble walking or moving due to their joint symptoms, and in some cases needed to be hospitalized. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or worsening joint symptoms. Your healthcare provider may stop DUPIXENT if you develop joint symptoms.

The most common side effects of DUPIXENT in patients with CRSwNP

include: injection site reactions, eye and eyelid inflammation, including redness, swelling, and itching, sometimes with blurred vision, high count of a certain white blood cell (eosinophilia), gastritis, joint pain (arthralgia), trouble sleeping (insomnia), and toothache.

The following additional side effects have been reported with DUPIXENT: facial rash or redness.

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all of the possible side effects of DUPIXENT. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

How should I store DUPIXENT?

- Store DUPIXENT in the refrigerator at 36°F to 46°F (2°C to 8°C).
- Store DUPIXENT in the original carton to protect from light.
- DUPIXENT can be stored at room temperature up to 77°F (25°C) up to 14 days. Throw away (dispose of) any DUPIXENT that has been left at room temperature for longer than 14 days.
- **Do not** heat or put DUPIXENT into direct sunlight.
- **Do not** freeze. **Do not** shake.
- **Keep DUPIXENT and all medicines out of the reach of children.**

General information about the safe and effective use of DUPIXENT.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use DUPIXENT for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give DUPIXENT to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about DUPIXENT for this use. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your pharmacist or healthcare provider for more information about DUPIXENT that is written for healthcare professionals.

For more information about DUPIXENT, go to www.DUPIXENT.com or call 1-844-DUPIXENT (1-844-387-4936)

What are the ingredients in DUPIXENT?

Active ingredient: dupilumab

Inactive ingredients: L-arginine hydrochloride, L-histidine, polysorbate 80, sodium acetate, sucrose, and water for injection

Manufactured by: Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Tarrytown, NY 10591 U.S. License # 1760; Marketed by sanofi-aventis U.S. LLC, (Bridgewater, NJ 08807) and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Tarrytown, NY 10591) / DUPIXENT® is a registered trademark of Sanofi Biotechnology / ©2024 Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. / sanofi-aventis U.S. LLC. All rights reserved.
Issue Date: January 2024 US.DUP.24.03.0357

THE LATEST ON

NASAL POLYPS

WHY DOESN'T EVERYONE WITH SINUSITIS GET NASAL POLYPS?

Why are polyps more severe in some people than in others? Scientists may have answers. In a study that looked at the genes of people with chronic sinusitis, researchers found that the people with polyps had an overactive gene called CRTH2. Those who had the most hyperactive CRTH2 gene tended to have stubborn polyps that came back after surgical removal. This discovery may lead drugmakers to develop a medicine that can calm this gene down.

SOURCE: *Frontiers in Immunology*

1 in 50

Estimated number of people in the U.S. who have nasal polyps.

SOURCE: National Library of Medicine

1 in 4

Number of people with chronic rhinosinusitis in the U.S. who have nasal polyps.

SOURCE: National Library of Medicine

REGAIN YOUR VOICE

Nasal polyps can give you a nasal-sounding voice. So can removing the polyps bring your old voice back? A new study says “yes.” Doctors measured the opening between the oral air passage and the nasal air passage—the velopharyngeal opening—both before and after surgery. Its size determines how nasal your voice sounds. They also had patients rate their satisfaction with the sound of their own voice both before and after the procedure. The velopharyngeal opening continued to expand up for up to 6 months after surgery and, during this time, people’s satisfaction with their voice kept improving, too.

SOURCE: *Scientific Reports*

BREATHE EASIER

Do you have asthma that’s difficult to get under control? Your nasal polyps may be to blame. A recent study looked at a group of 151 people who have both nasal polyps and asthma. They found that those who had the most severe nasal polyps were more likely than others to have difficult-to-control asthma. The study points to the need for a customized approach to the treatment of both asthma and polyps in each patient. If you have uncontrolled asthma, talk to your doctor about your entire treatment plan for both your asthma and your nasal polyps.

SOURCE: *American Journal of Otolaryngology*

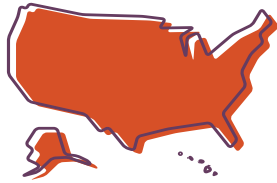


STATS & FACTS

By Sonya Collins

Reviewed by Neha Pathak, MD, WebMD Lead Medical Editor

40
to
60

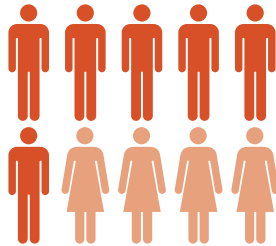


Age group most affected by nasal polyps in the U.S.

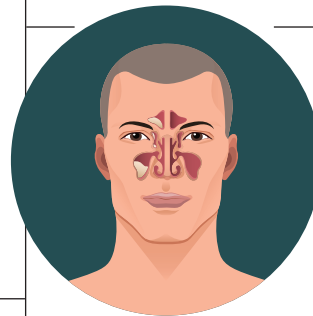
4x

Your increase in risk for nasal polyps if a next-of-kin has them, too.

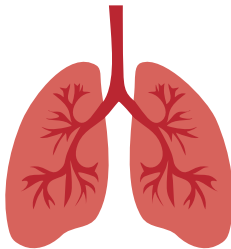
6 in 10



Number of people with nasal polyps who are men.



Estimated number of people with chronic sinusitis with nasal polyps who are white, non-Hispanic. Black people with chronic sinusitis are less likely to have polyps.



>6 in 10

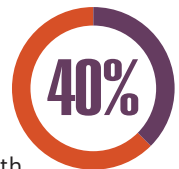
Number of people with nasal polyps who also have asthma.

>3 in 4

>1 in 5

Number of people with chronic rhinosinusitis who also have nasal polyps.

4 in 10



Number of people with nasal polyps who are women.

SOURCES: National Library of Medicine, *Journal of Asthma and Allergy*



SPECIALISTS WHO CAN HELP

DOCTORS YOU MIGHT SEE FOR YOUR NASAL POLYPS

By Rachel Reiff Ellis

Reviewed by Neha Pathak, MD, WebMD Lead Medical Editor

Your primary care doctor is likely your first stop when nasal polyps start causing symptoms. They can diagnose nasal polyps and recommend some treatments, but they'll also refer you to other doctors who specialize in nasal polyp care.

OTOLARYNGOLOGISTS (ENTs)

An otolaryngologist, also called an ear, nose, and throat (ENT) specialist, is the go-to doctor for nasal polyps because polyps drive symptoms affecting the ears, nose, and throat.

“ENT doctors frequently quarterback the care of this complex set of patients,” says Eugene G. Brown, MD, an otolaryngologist at Charleston ENT & Allergy in Mount Pleasant, SC. “We offer the most comprehensive care of the disease.”

An ENT can do imaging to help diagnose polyps and see how severe they are. This imaging equipment may connect with software in operating rooms to allow for computer assisted surgical procedures if you need them. An ENT is the doctor who will monitor your progress as you treat polyps, too.

“Nasal endoscopy performed by ENTs is the best way to monitor this disease,” Brown says. “Most ENT offices also have staff trained to allergy test and to administer allergy shots and even biologic therapies in the most complicated instances.”

ALLERGISTS AND PULMONOLOGISTS

Team-based care between an ENT, allergists, and pulmonologists (lung doctors) may be the best course for you, especially if you have a more complicated case, Brown says.

Because people with nasal polyps often also deal with asthma, you may need a doctor who can manage this aspect of your care, too. “Some ENTs manage asthma, and some do not,” Brown says. Most allergists also manage asthma, as do pulmonologists. If you see these specialists, it's likely to be alongside your ENT.

“An allergist may manage nasal polyp patients on their own, but they don't do surgery, and most do not do nasal endoscopy,” Brown says. “They will frequently treat the patient with nasal sprays, medicines, allergy shots, and maybe lung inhalers as needed.”

NASAL POLYPS 101

CAUSES, SYMPTOMS, AND DIAGNOSIS

By Rachel Reiff Ellis

Reviewed by Neha Pathak, MD, WebMD Lead Medical Editor

Your stuffy nose just won't seem to go away, and then you learn it's something more: nasal polyps. Here's what you need to know about these nose growths.

Nasal polyps are small, noncancerous sacs that form inside your nose and sinuses. Some people don't feel or notice them at all when they have them. In other people, they cause uncomfortable and long-lasting symptoms.

CAUSES

Doctors don't know exactly why nasal polyps form, but they're linked to having constant bouts of inflammation in your nose and sinuses, also called chronic rhinosinusitis. Inflammation can have different causes such as allergens, upper respiratory infections, or even secondhand smoke.

"Things we know about for sure include environmental allergies, such as grasses, trees, ragweed, and allergies to cats and dogs that are



significant," says Meha Fox, MD, assistant professor of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

You may also get polyps if you have an underlying disease such as cystic fibrosis or other autoimmune disease.

COMMON SYMPTOMS

Once your nasal polyps have grown to a certain size, you're likely to have a hard time breathing through your nostrils. You may have more mucus, cough, have headaches and sinus pressure, and you may lose some of your senses of taste and smell.

"Polyps tend to develop slowly over some time, and so it may either take a while for symptoms to develop or people may get so used to the slow changes in their upper airway that they never develop major symptoms," says Zara M. Patel, MD, director of endoscopic skull base surgery at



Stanford University School of Medicine in California.

Nasal polyps don't typically cause any pain or bleeding, so if you have either, tell your doctor.

DIAGNOSING NASAL POLYPS

You might think that a doctor could simply take a glance in your nostrils to diagnose you, but it takes more investigation than that.

"It's rare that you can see polyps from just looking from the front of the nose, like a primary care or urgent care provider would be able to do," Patel says.

An otolaryngologist (ear, nose, and throat doctor, or ENT) can use a small, flexible tube with a camera on it called an endoscope to examine far enough back in your nostrils. This helps them see your nasal cavity and sinus drainage pathways.

If you've never had a sinus surgery before, your doctor may need to use a CT scan to look deeper

in your sinuses.

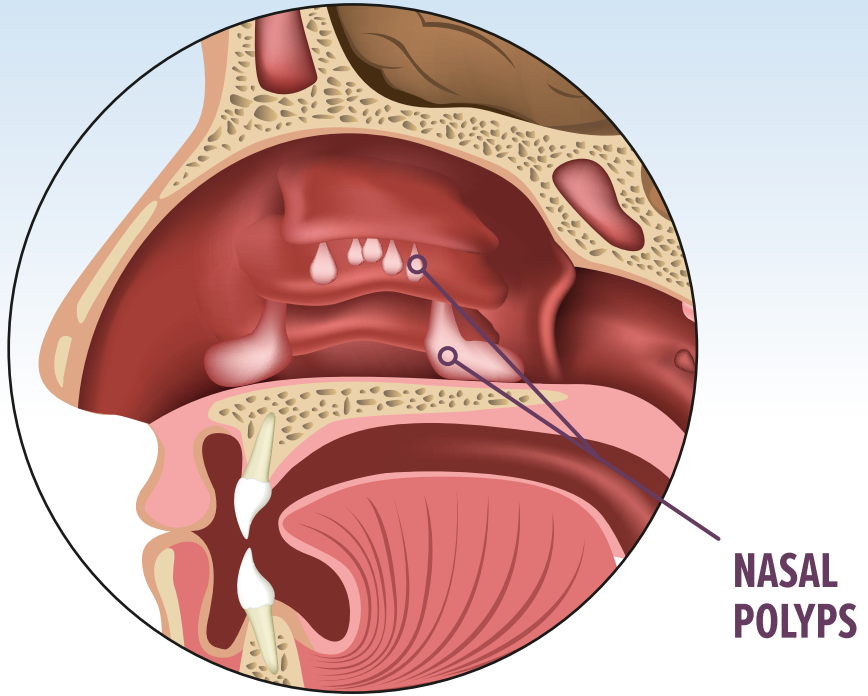
"Sometimes we get a CT scan to determine the extent of disease, such as how many sinuses are involved," Fox says. "This helps guide our treatment plan."

WHO'S AT RISK?

Meha Fox, MD, lists factors that increase your chances of nasal polyps.

- + Multiple allergies
- + Cystic fibrosis
- + Autoimmune conditions (such as granulomatosis with polyangiitis)
- + Cilia (nose hair) dysfunction

EXPLORE THE NASAL CAVITY



NASAL POLYPS

These painless growths can develop along the lining of the nasal passages and sinuses in response to chronic inflammation.

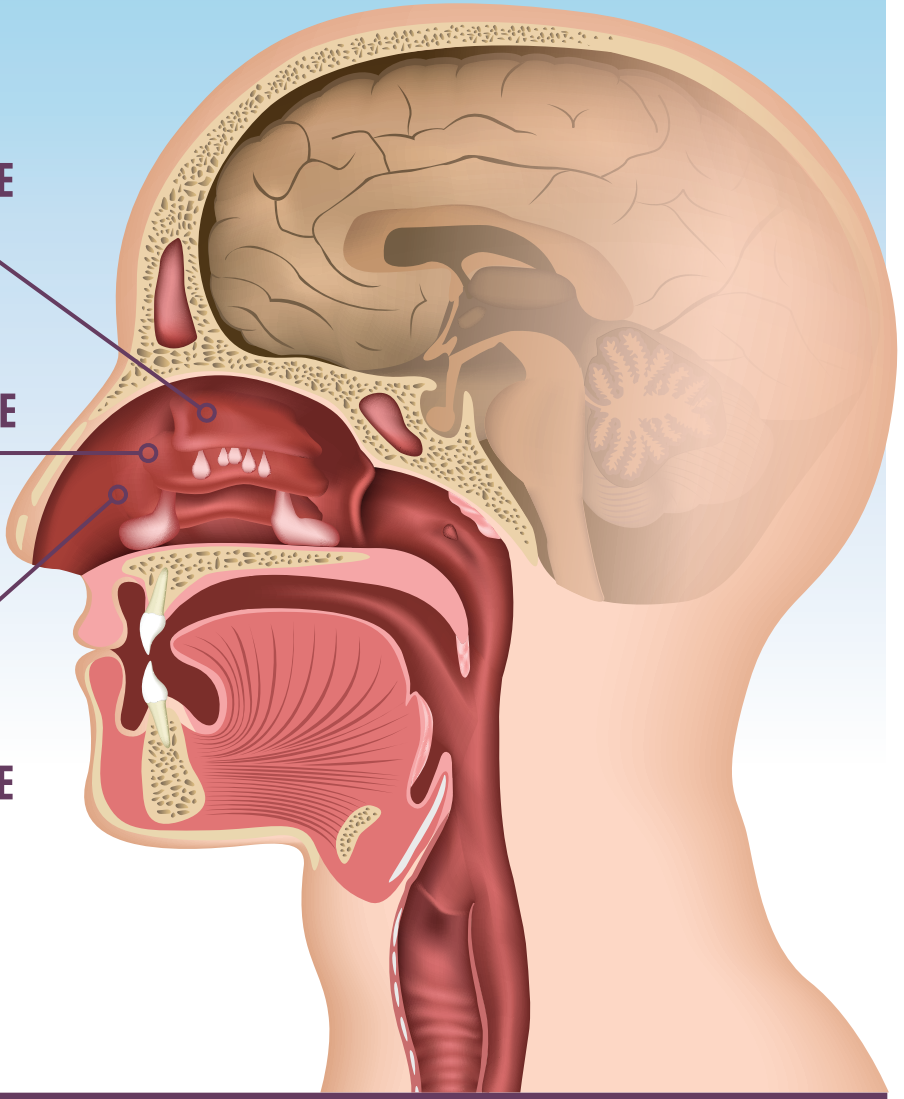
RUNNY NOSE

When you have a sinus infection, fluid builds up in your nasal passages, which can lead to a runny nose.

**SUPERIOR
TURBINATE**

**MIDDLE
TURBINATE**

**INFERIOR
TURBINATE**



SUPERIOR, MIDDLE, AND INFERIOR TURBINATES

These bony structures, surrounded by blood vessels and nasal lining, clean and humidify the air that enters the nasal passages. In chronic sinusitis, they can get swollen and inflamed, produce too much mucus, and lead to a stuffy nose.

NASAL INFLAMMATION

Swelling and irritation in the nasal passages can prevent proper drainage, cause a buildup of mucus and sometimes pus, and make it difficult to breathe.

SOURCES: Mayo Clinic, World Allergy Organization, *Pharmacy Times*, *Current Medical Research and Opinion*, CDC, Stanford Health Care

MY LIFE WITH NASAL POLYPS

FROM OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS TO SURGERY, I WASN'T AFRAID TO TRY NEW THINGS

By Jawanda Stukes

Reviewed by Melinda Ratini, DO, MS,
WebMD Medical Reviewer



Sometimes life moves so fast that you can miss things with your health. I was living an active life and didn't realize that my back-to-back sinus infections were a sign of something deeper.

REACHING FOR RELIEF

In 2018, I had congestion, a constant nasal drip, cough, and my asthma kept flaring. My doctor gave me rounds of antibiotics, but they weren't helping! So I resorted to over-the-counter medications that would get me through. I was taking medications for daytime sinus symptoms, nighttime sinus symptoms, and migraines triggered by the sinus medicines. Each batch would last me about 4 hours, and I did this for months. I was missing work. Life was hard.

FIGURING IT OUT

Finally, after months of no relief, my doctor suggested I see an allergist. He ordered a CT scan, and based on my results, said my issue was more severe than he could treat. He referred me to an ear, nose, and throat (ENT) doctor, who confirmed

what the CT revealed: My nasal passages were full of polyps. It was a relief to finally have an answer.

He recommended surgery to remove my polyps. At the time, I didn't think it was a big deal, but I just wasn't informed. After some sticker shock, I moved forward with the surgery in the summer of 2019.

There is a lot to do post-surgery. I had to do nasal rinses and couldn't blow or pick at my nose. It sounds like you're underwater for a bit, too! You must get your nasal passages scoped (cleaned out), and my doctor wasn't sympathetic to how painful it can be, so I switched doctors. That made a big difference for me.

I lost my sense of smell after surgery. That was tough, too! When your sense of smell is gone, it messes with your taste buds, which was not great because I'm a foodie.

I tell people now to make sure they know what to expect after surgery.

Despite the post-surgery challenges, I'm glad I got it. I was no longer congested. Most of my polyps were gone and I started to feel like myself again.



MOVING FORWARD

Now, almost 5 years post-surgery, I'm doing reasonably well. I got a full panel of allergy tests after surgery so I could learn what else might be triggering some of my sinus symptoms. Apparently, I'm allergic to trees and pet dander and mold. I knew I couldn't live in a bubble. Thankfully, I didn't have to part ways with my dog, Petunia Grace, because she is hypoallergenic.

I had been taking two allergy medications per day, a nasal spray, and a rescue asthma inhaler as needed. I was trying to stay hydrated and made other lifestyle changes to control my sinus symptoms. While my doctor said my surgery was successful, I still didn't fully have my sense of smell back.

Then last year, I was in my doctor's office and picked up a magazine that had an ad about a new medication for nasal polyps. I wanted to try it! After some time, I was able to get it approved by insurance. I do at-home injections every few weeks. I started the medication at the end of 2023 and within 2 weeks, I had my sense of smell back. This was the missing piece. These days, I'm tasting amazing food and I'm smelling the flowers again.



JAWANDA'S TIPS

- + If something doesn't feel right, ask questions.
- + Read what's in your doctor's office. (It helped me find a new treatment.)
- + Ask what to expect after surgery.



THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY TREATMENT FOR NASAL POLYPS

IMPROVE YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE NOW

By Kendall K. Morgan | Reviewed by Neha Pathak, MD, WebMD Lead Medical Editor

Nasal polyps come with a variety of frustrating symptoms. You may have a runny nose and postnasal drip that just won't quit. They can make breathing through your nose and sleeping more difficult. You may have pressure around your sinuses and pain in your teeth. You may even lose interest in your favorite foods because you can't smell or taste them anymore.

STOP THEM IN THEIR TRACKS

Though these growths aren't cancerous, they do worsen over time. If you think treatment for your nasal polyps isn't working or they're coming back after surgery, it's important to see your doctor right away, says Gregory M. Levitin, MD, an otolaryngologist at the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai in New York City.

"If you do nothing, polyps will gradually progress over time," Levitin says. "You may not know how sick you are. For a while, nasal polyps can be tolerable, and people live with them. But gradually, like a pot of water that's slowly boiled, it gets worse."

CONSIDER YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE

Without successful treatment, your nasal polyps

will likely keep growing to fill up more and more of your nose. Levitin says that nasal polyps also tend to multiply. When a doctor looks into your nasal passages with an endoscope, they may see you have not just one or two polyps but many.

"The next thing you know, it's greatly affecting quality of life," Levitin says. "You're snoring. You can't taste food. You're not sleeping well, not feeling well. These are important to diagnose and treat early."

WILL SURGERY HELP?

Levitin says when polyps are caught late, you may need sinus surgery. But even then, polyps often will come back again if you haven't treated the underlying cause of the inflammation. After surgery or during treatment, it's important to see a doctor with experience treating polyps to make sure it's working.

"It's important to monitor them," Levitin says. "That way, if polyps start to come back [or worsen], we can implement therapy, including newer medications or biologics." And that can keep you breathing easier.

UNEXPECTED EFFECTS OF NASAL POLYPS

DON'T LET UNCONTROLLED POLYPS KEEP YOU FROM ENJOYING LIFE

By Kendall K. Morgan

Reviewed by Neha Pathak, MD,
WebMD Lead Medical Editor



It's not uncommon with nasal polyps for people to think—sometimes for years—that they've got allergies or a cold, says Kevin Hur, MD, an otolaryngologist at Keck Medicine of USC in Los Angeles. The difference is that those symptoms won't ever go away on their own. When left untreated or uncontrolled, nasal polyps can have a surprisingly big impact in all areas of your life.

“Depending on the severity of symptoms, nasal polyps can lead to fatigue, poor sleep, lack of concentration, reduced productivity, and irritability,” Hur says. “Nasal polyps can significantly impair a person's overall quality of life.”

POOR SLEEP

Especially when nasal polyps are large, they can block your nasal passageways when you sleep. When you can't breathe freely, you may struggle to fall asleep or wake up often. The sleep you do manage to get may be poor, leaving you feeling tired and groggy all the time.

“Polyps obstruct the natural airflow through the nose and can also lead to mucus drainage or postnasal drip, which disrupts healthy sleep patterns,” Hur says.

FOOD AND YOUR SEX LIFE

Nasal polyps may cause you to lose interest in even your favorite foods.

“One of the common symptoms of nasal polyps is decreased sense of smell and taste,” Hur says. “Not being able to smell and taste flavors can definitely

affect a person's ability to enjoy food.”

When your nose is stuffed up or you're chronically fatigued, your sex life also can take a toll.

MOOD, RELATIONSHIPS, AND YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

As you struggle to sleep or enjoy life, you may notice you're more easily irritated by everyday annoyances. You may get angry with friends and family more easily than you should. You may have more trouble dealing with stress at work.

Nasal polyps put you at greater risk for mental health problems, too. Studies have shown more risk for developing anxiety and depression in people with nasal polyps compared to people without nasal polyps, Hur notes.

“This is likely due to the significant effect that nasal polyps can have on a person's quality of life,” he says. To make sure uncontrolled polyps aren't keeping you from enjoying life, ask your doctor about treatment options, including medicines or surgery.



ARE NASAL POLYPS RELATED TO ASPIRIN SENSITIVITY?

LEARN HOW THIS HARMFUL REACTION TO COMMON PAIN RELIEVERS MAY IMPACT YOUR TREATMENT

By Kendall K. Morgan

Reviewed by Neha Pathak, MD,
WebMD Lead Medical Editor

Some people with nasal polyps have aspirin sensitivity or a more complex, chronic condition called aspirin-exacerbated respiratory disease (AERD). It's more likely if you have nasal polyps and asthma. If you have this, you'll react after taking aspirin or other common pain relievers, including ibuprofen and naproxen.

"The exact cause of aspirin sensitivity and its connection to nasal polyps and asthma is not completely understood, but it is believed to involve an abnormal immune response and the

release of inflammatory mediators, such as leukotrienes," says Martin J. Citardi, MD, a rhinologist at UTHealth Houston.

AVOID ASPIRIN AND OTHER NSAIDS

When you have aspirin sensitivity, Citardi says it can make your nasal polyp treatment more challenging. Avoiding aspirin and other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) is a good first step. Ask your doctor if you should also try limiting foods high in naturally occurring compounds called salicylates.

"When nasal polyps occur in individuals with AERD, they tend to be more severe and recurrent, and their management may require specialized approaches," Citardi says.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Citardi says medicines called leukotriene modifiers may help with your inflammation and nasal congestion. Nasal corticosteroid sprays can help control the inflammation linked to your nasal polyps, too. Sprays won't make polyps go away, but they may shrink them and help relieve your nasal congestion and postnasal drip.

Biologic therapies that target your immune system are another option when you have nasal polyps with aspirin sensitivity. If your symptoms and nasal polyps are severe, you may need surgery.

"Surgical intervention is generally considered when other treatments have been ineffective, and the benefits outweigh the risks associated with surgery," Citardi says.

TACKLE YOUR SENSITIVITY

Ask your doctor about aspirin desensitization therapy. If you have this therapy, your doctor will give you aspirin at increasing doses to help your body adjust and stop reacting.

While aspirin desensitization can help, it isn't for everyone and has some risks, Citardi notes. You'll want to find a treatment plan that matches the severity of your symptoms and works for you. Make sure you're seeing a doctor with experience managing nasal polyps with aspirin sensitivity and check in with them often.

"Regular follow-up and monitoring are essential to assess the effectiveness of treatment and make any necessary adjustments," Citardi says.

CONNECTING IS KEY

TAKING CARE OF YOU

By Rachel Reiff Ellis

Reviewed by Neha Pathak, MD,
WebMD Lead Medical Editor



According to research, people who live with chronic sinusitis and nasal polyps are more likely to also live with anxiety and depression. While nasal polyps aren't a direct cause of these issues, experts believe they are linked.

“We don't know exactly why the connection exists, but in large part, we see that overall quality of life is affected when you deal with the symptoms of nasal polyps and resulting chronic sinusitis,” says Kenneth Zuckerman, MD, an otolaryngologist at ENT Specialists of Orange County in Newport Beach, CA.

Your best defense is treating the issue with good prevention measures and medications. But there are steps you can take to bolster your overall mental wellness as you do.

CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Your doctor may know of local support groups for people with nasal polyps in your area. Social media is a great place to search for others living with the same symptoms. The Chronic Sinusitis with Nasal Polyps (CRSwNP) Support & Discussion Group on Facebook has over 10,000 members who share tips and provide a place to share struggles.

“You should always follow up any

medical advice you hear with your personal doctor, but these kinds of groups can be beneficial for emotional support,” Zuckerman says.

CONSIDER MENTAL HEALTH HELP

In addition to the bothersome symptoms of nasal polyps, living with any chronic illness can bring on invisible symptoms such as pain, fatigue, and mood disorders. Managing your nasal polyps can add to your stress each day, too.

A licensed counselor or therapist can help with the mental aspect of your condition. Start with your health insurance company to find a list of mental health providers covered by your plan. A professional can give you tools for improving mood or, if needed, guidance on medications that can treat conditions like anxiety and depression.

WHOLE SELF-HELP

These steps can help boost overall mood.

- + Eat nutritious foods
- + Exercise every day
- + Avoid unhealthy coping habits such as alcohol
- + Reach out to friends and family

SLEEP WELL

WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR A GOOD NIGHT'S REST

By Sonya Collins

Reviewed by Neha Pathak, MD, WebMD Lead Medical Editor



Nasal polyps make it hard to breathe. When you can't breathe, you can't sleep. Treating your polyps can get you sleeping again. Some steps you can take on your own might help, too. Here's what you need to know about nasal polyps, sleep, and how you can get the rest you need.

HOW NASAL POLYPS AFFECT SLEEP

Nasal polyps, when they're big enough or in certain places, can block airflow through your nose. "This leads to frequent arousals from sleep, mouth breathing, and dry mouth," says Shannon Sullivan, MD, a sleep specialist at Stanford Sleep Medicine Center in Redwood City, CA.

Mouth breathing is more than just uncomfortable when you're nodding off. It can lead to other problems. For starters, snoring, which can interrupt breathing and wake you up all night.

"If you have sleep apnea, polyps can exacerbate it," says Noah S. Siegel, MD, director of the sleep medicine and surgery division at Massachusetts Eye and Ear in Boston. "If you're not breathing through your nose, you might not get the benefit of your sleep apnea therapies like a CPAP or oral appliance."

When your mouth is open all night, it gets dry. That means waking up with a sore throat. It can even cause dental problems.

BETTER HABITS, BETTER SLEEP

Sleep experts recommend these habits for better sleep:

- + Follow a relaxing nightly bedtime routine. It might include meditation, soft music, or a warm bath.
- + Keep your bedroom cool, dark, and quiet.
- + Keep screens like smartphones and TVs out of the bed and bedroom.
- + Avoid large meals, caffeine, and alcohol before bed.
- + Skip daytime naps.



GET HELP FROM YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

“If you have nasal polyps and are sleeping poorly, feeling unrefreshed when you wake, or feeling sleepy during the day, talk to your health care provider,” Sullivan says.

If polyps are the cause of your tossing and turning, the first step is to get the polyps under control so you can breathe at night.

“By controlling nasal polyps, you’ll get improvement in your symptoms both during the day and at night,” Siegel says.

If you’ve tried treatments that haven’t worked, it might be time to try something new. You may have other treatment options, including steroid sprays, steroid pills, and surgery.

Sometimes allergies are behind nasal polyps. You’ll need to follow your doctor’s treatment plan for your allergies, too.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you don’t get medical care for your polyps, they will continue to keep you up at night. But while

you’re between treatments or waiting for a new one to take effect, there are things you can do to move the needle toward better slumber.

Congestion and breathing problems often get worse when you lie down. Some people with polyps breathe easier when they sleep propped up on a pillow or a bed wedge.

Home remedies might help, too. “Sometimes nasal strips or saline rinses help out in certain situations,” Siegel says.

If allergies are behind your nasal polyps, limit your exposure to triggers in your bedroom. How you do that depends on the allergy. You might need to keep pets out of the bedroom, vacuum frequently, or use zippered, allergen-resistant covers on your pillows and mattress. Your doctor can offer other tips.

WHY IT MATTERS

Sleep affects every aspect of your health. Ongoing bad sleep can raise risk for chronic diseases including diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and depression.

“Like diet and exercise, sleep is essential for physical health, mental health, and well-being,” Sullivan says. “Healthy sleep helps you be your best.”

TREATING NASAL POLYPS WITH MEDICATIONS AND OTHER THERAPIES

METHODS FOR MANAGING YOUR CONDITION

By Rachel Reiff Ellis

Reviewed by Neha Pathak, MD, WebMD Lead Medical Editor

For some people, nasal polyps don't ever fully go away. But there are many treatment options to help reduce symptoms. Your doctor will choose a treatment based on the size of your polyps, how severe your symptoms are, and what's causing them.

"The goal with treatment is to reduce inflammation," says Amy Best, MD, an ear, nose, and throat specialist at Community Hospital East in Indianapolis, IN.

STEROIDS

Steroid sprays you inhale through your nose are the typical treatment doctors choose for nasal polyps. You can get some over the counter, or your doctor can prescribe them.

"These sprays can reduce the size of polyps, or in some cases, make them go away completely," Best says.

You can also take steroids in pill form, but because they go through your whole body, the side effects can be harder to deal with in the long term. Injectable steroids you get in your nose may be an option if your polyps are severe.

ANTIBIOTICS

"It's pretty common to get sinus infections when you have nasal polyps, especially if they're blocking your nasal passages," says David Tom, MD, an ear, nose and throat specialist at Oregon Medical Group in Eugene, OR.

If your sinus infection is bacterial, your doctor can prescribe an oral antibiotic to treat the infection and help inflammation go down, reducing the size of your polyps.

ANTIHISTAMINES AND ALLERGY SHOTS

Taking medications like antihistamines and regular allergy shots to tame your allergy symptoms won't address polyps themselves, but they can help keep inflammation and other issues at bay that lead to polyps forming.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR

Understand your treatment course.

- + What side effects should I expect?
- + Do I need to follow any restrictions?
- + Is there a generic alternative for my medication?
- + Where can I learn more about my treatment?

BIOLOGICS

You take biologic medications as an injection every other week. Taking them may reduce your chance of needing surgery or oral steroids.

"Biologics work by targeting specific cells or proteins in your immune system to reduce the swelling and inflammation of nasal polyps," Tom says.

ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

Always consult your doctor before trying new treatments.

Some studies show that when you apply capsaicin (the chemical that gives cayenne peppers their heat) inside the nose, it may help reduce the size of polyps. It may also cause irritation and burning in your nose.

Putting drops of tea tree oil in the water you use for steam inhalation may work as an antimicrobial and help reduce itching, infection, and inflammation.

In studies, turmeric helped calm airway irritation. You can add it to food or try turmeric tea.

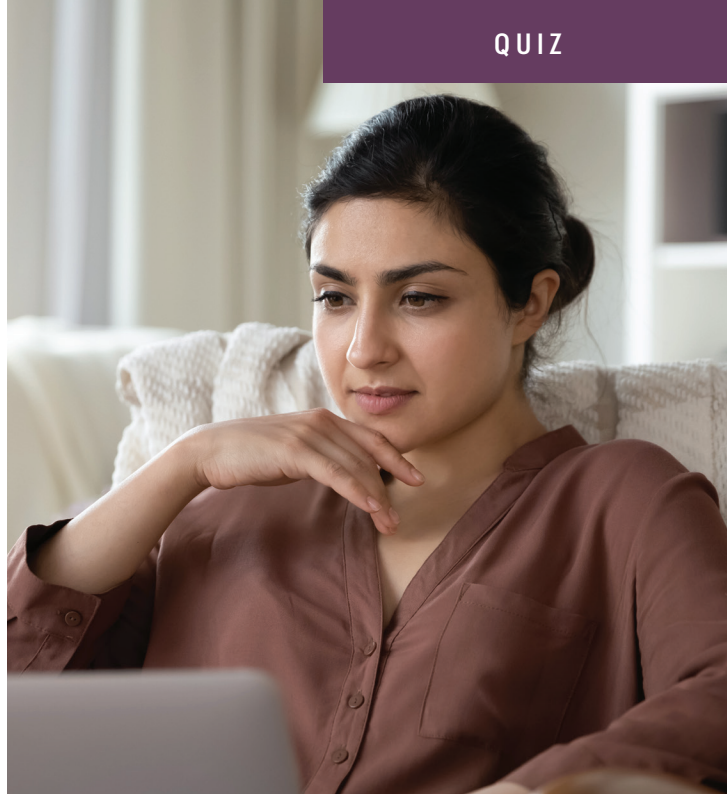
If medications aren't working, your doctor may suggest surgery. This may be a permanent fix, or your polyps may grow back afterward. You'll also need to continue taking medications after your surgery.

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW?

TAKE OUR NASAL POLYPS TEST TO FIND OUT

By Kendall K. Morgan

Reviewed by Melinda Ratini, DO, MS,
WebMD Medical Reviewer



1. Your treatment for nasal polyps may include steroids, biologics, and/or surgery.

- True False

2. Your primary care doctor can easily diagnose and treat your chronic sinusitis with nasal polyps.

- True False

3. Your chronic sinusitis with nasal polyps may get worse from smoking, incense, chemical fumes, dust, or taking aspirin.

- True False

4. Getting enough vitamin D may help with your nasal polyps.

- True False

- 1. TRUE.** You'll have many treatment options to help shrink or remove your polyps. If your chronic sinusitis with nasal polyps isn't well controlled, ask your doctor what they recommend for you to try next and why.
- 2. FALSE.** Many people with this condition don't get a diagnosis for years after symptoms start. Even with a diagnosis and treatment plan, many people still report challenges in managing polyps and their symptoms. If you aren't finding relief, ask for a referral to an ear, nose, and throat (ENT) doctor or other specialist with more experience treating nasal polyps.
- 3. TRUE.** Many things in the environment can irritate your nose and sinuses to make your sinus inflammation and nasal polyps worse. Some people with nasal polyps also are sensitive to aspirin or other over-the-counter pain relievers. Ask your care team about common triggers and how to identify yours.
- 4. TRUE.** There's evidence that a vitamin D deficiency may play a role in nasal polyps. Vitamin D can be found in certain foods and supplements as well as in sunshine. Talk to your doctor to see which is right for you.

looking to
STAY WELL
 every day



Fuel Your Body with Good for You Ingredients



ECHINACEA

Beautiful flower traditionally thought to help your body's defenses

LEMONGRASS

Tasty herb commonly thought to be a supportive hand to your overall health



ROSE HIPS

Tart and tasty herb commonly used to help support your well-being

ELDERFLOWERS

Light colored flower traditionally considered to help support a healthy lifestyle



BIGELOW
 BENEFITS

Redefining Wellness
EVERY DAY