

YOUTH HEALTH BULLETIN



SEPTEMBER 2017

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: YOUR SINUSES



Sinuses are very important parts of our bodies. But, unless you have a cold or allergies, you probably do not think about them too much. Wally Cat wants you to learn about what sinuses are and what they do. Did you know that sinuses start developing before you are born? And also that some sinuses continue to grow until you are about 20 years old?

What are sinuses?

Your sinuses are the air-filled spaces found in the bones in your head and behind your face. You have eight sinuses, and they are in pairs. When you look at your face in the mirror, your sinuses are on both sides of your nose (in your cheek area), behind and between your eyes, behind the forehead and at the back of the nasal area.

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The mucus membrane helps keep the air you breathe moist and traps germs and dust. Your body produces mucus to help.

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Much like your nose has a mucus membrane (the thin, moist tissue that lines your nose) the sinuses have one too. The mucus membrane has a very important job to do: it helps keep the air you breathe moist and traps germs and dust. Your body produces mucus (also known as snot) to help.

When you have a cold or allergies, the mucus membrane gets swollen and produces even more mucus.

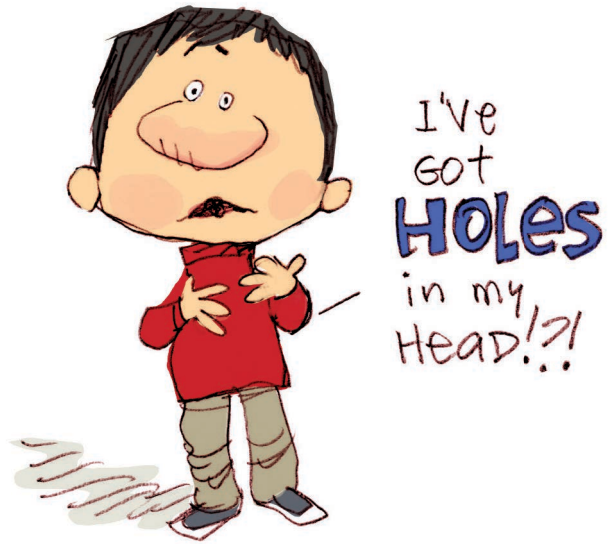
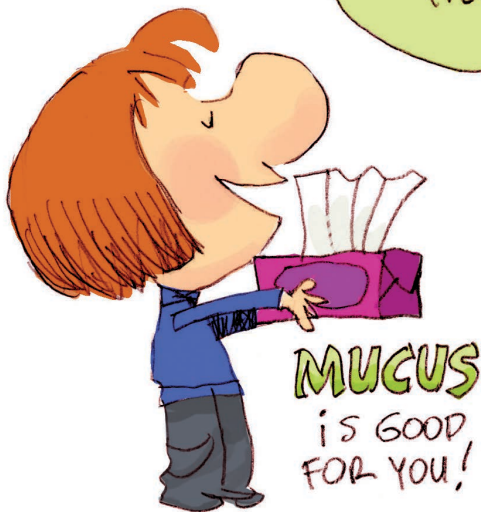
Why do we have sinuses?

Would you believe that scientists do not know exactly why we have sinuses? There are some theories out there though. Some scientists think that part of the reason is that it helps keep the head from being too heavy for the body. Because sinuses are basically pockets of air, and air is light, that helps us keep our head held high. Sinuses also affect your voice. The different sizes of sinuses give different depth and tone to voices. Think about the last time you had a cold, do you think you sounded funny?

Having a runny nose

There can be many reasons for a runny nose:

- **A cold or flu:** Your sinuses can fill with extra mucus.



The extra mucus is created to help keep the germs from getting into the lungs and the rest of the body.

- **Allergies:** Sinuses can feel pressure when you have allergies. Allergies are when your body reacts to a substance like dust like it was a germ.
- **Infection:** Sometimes the sinuses get infected. When this happens you may get a fever, or have a runny nose for several days, or even a cough. If you have a sinus infection, you will need to go see a healthcare provider.

Hopefully you learned a little more about the sinuses and you do not have many colds or the flu this year!

Can you unscramble these words?

- EISNUSS: _____
UMSUC MBMERANE: _____
LERLAIGSE: _____
GERSM: _____

ANSWERS: SINUSES, MUCUS MEMBRANE, ALLERGIES, GERMS

