

Patient information

Sinus surgery - endoscopic

What is Endoscopic Sinus Surgery?

Endoscopic sinus surgery is a relatively new approach to diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the nose and paranasal sinuses. Endoscopic sinus surgery is performed with endoscopes to allow the surgeon to directly visualise the nose and paranasal sinuses and repair obstructions to natural drainage from the sinus cavities. Endoscopic sinus surgery differs from 'conventional' surgery in stressing diagnosis and therapy of blockage to natural sinus drainage. If an obstruction to natural drainage is identified and corrected, secondary disease in paranasal sinuses will often improve spontaneously.

Endoscopic examination of the nose and sinuses, under topical anaesthesia, is normally done as an outpatient procedure, and together with detailed x-ray studies may reveal problems which cannot be identified by other means.

Endoscopic sinus surgery preserves normal tissue and may avoid more extensive surgical procedures. Endoscopic sinus surgery is usually performed under general anaesthesia, or intravenous sedation with local anaesthesia. Sinus linings and openings may be viewed directly and diseased or obstructing bone removed. Often, it is not necessary to apply nasal packing after the operation.

Guidelines for endoscopic sinus surgery

Endoscopic sinus surgery is intended for patients with chronic sinus problems, which have not responded to medical therapy. Symptoms of sinus disease may include:

- Facial pain or a feeling of 'fullness'
- Difficulty in breathing through the nose
- A persistent bad smell in the nose

- Chronic post-nasal discharge
- Cough or hoarseness, headache or pain around the eyes

All of these can occur without sinus disease. The diagnosis of sinus problems must be based on an evaluation by your doctor.

This evaluation may include nasal endoscopy (looking into the nose with the nasal endoscopes) to check for obstruction of the normal drainage of the sinuses.

In the majority of patients with sinus problems, surgery is not indicated or required. Most patients with these problems can be treated medically without surgery. This treatment may consist of antibiotics or other medications, prescription medicated nasal spray, treatment for allergies, or environmental control (such as stopping smoking). The type of medical treatment chosen is based upon your doctor's assessment of the cause.

Unless your doctor finds a problem, which requires an operation, one or more forms of medical treatment are used as a primary therapy for most sinus problems. In some people, however, surgery is required. Surgery may be needed for localised areas of infection or inflammation which do not clear with antibiotics or which recur when the antibiotics are stopped, or for other reasons, which you should discuss with your surgeon.

Evaluation and follow up treatment in endoscopic sinus surgery

At the initial consultation, a complete examination of your nose and paranasal sinuses will be performed. If you have been treated for sinus problems in the past, you should discuss this with your surgeon at the initial consultation.

After the preliminary evaluation, if it is felt that you might benefit from endoscopic sinus surgery, your nose may be examined internally with endoscopes in Outpatients. After a topical anaesthetic is applied, the nose is examined for signs of diseased tissue or bone that could be the cause of the obstruction.

If endoscopic sinus surgery is indicated, an x-ray study, CAT (computerised axial tomography) will be scheduled for you as an outpatient at the hospital. Since sinus tissue is buried in fine bone, this CAT study gives a detailed picture of the structure of the sinuses. This will be used during your surgery.

If, after the completed consultation and discussion with your doctor, it is felt that there is a reasonably good chance that you could benefit from endoscopic sinus surgery, a date will be arranged for the procedure. Surgery can often be performed on day care basis, but you should be prepared to be admitted to the hospital. You may want to take several days off from work after the surgery, and you will need to

be seen in the clinic for several post-operative visits to make sure you are healing properly. Occasionally, other procedures may be needed, or more extensive surgery required. If so, your doctor will discuss this with you.

If you require any further advice or information, please contact the ward on 01284 713430 or 01284 713290.

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