



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

A nasal polyp is a benign (noncancerous), soft tissue growth that develops inside the nose. Polyps look like small grapes and can grow alone, but usually occur in clusters. They often affect both sides of the nose. Nasal polyps are more common in adults than in children.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Obstruction of air through the nose (chronic “stuffy-nose” feeling).
- Sense of smell is reduced.
- Nasal discharge.
- Sneezing.
- Facial pain or headaches.
- Feeling of fullness in the face.
- Itchy eyes.
- Large polyps may cause the nose to be deformed.

CAUSES

Chronic inflammation of the lining of the nose and sinuses. Inflammation is normally a reaction to injury, infection, or irritation. Why it occurs in the nose and sinuses and causes polyps is not clearly understood.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Chronic sinus, nasal, or lung disorders. This can include asthma, allergic rhinitis, cystic fibrosis, sinusitis, fungal infections, and others.
- Aspirin sensitivity. This is not a true allergy, but it may cause allergy-like reactions (such as hives, swelling, and asthma). People with this sensitivity need to avoid aspirin and other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

No specific preventive measures. Getting treatment for allergies, infections, or other nose and sinus problems may help reduce the risk factors.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Treatment with drugs or surgery can help improve the symptoms.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Polyps may recur after surgery.
- Recurrent or chronic sinusitis.



DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Your health care provider will do an exam of the nasal passages. Medical tests may include a CT or endoscopy (small, lighted telescopic instrument) to see inside the nose. Allergy testing may be done in some cases.
- Treatment may involve drugs to temporarily shrink the polyps and help relieve the symptoms.
- Try to avoid any substances that you know you are allergic to, such as dust mites, pollen, mold, etc.
- Surgery is often done to remove polyps. The type of surgery will depend on the location, size, and the number of polyps involved. Your health care provider will discuss the options, the risks, and benefits with you.

MEDICATIONS

- For minor pain, you may use acetaminophen.
- Nonprescription antihistamines may help relieve symptoms, but they do not treat the polyps.
- Corticosteroid drugs in oral form may be prescribed for a short period to attempt to shrink the polyps.
- Corticosteroid drugs in nasal spray may be prescribed for treatment of smaller polyps. They are also prescribed following surgery to help prevent recurrence of polyps.
- Antibiotics or antifungal drugs may be prescribed for treatment of infection.

ACTIVITY

No limits.

DIET

If you have food allergies, be sure to avoid those foods.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has symptoms of nasal polyps.
- Any new symptoms develop or other symptoms get worse after treatment is started.

Special notes:

More notes on the back of this page



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