

# Sinus Problems?

## The Number One Cause is Allergies



**E**very year, sinus problems force people to seek out relief. Denton Combs, CNP, board licensed and certified family nurse practitioner, has been helping people find that much-needed diagnosis and treatment for 13 years.

Chronic sinus problems, such as congestion, itchy nose or eyes, sneezing, facial pain and pressure, and runny nose or post-nasal drip impact all aspects of life, including memory, mood, sleep, concentration and even exercise.

“So many people, after diagnosis, find out the cause of their sinus problems is allergy, and for years they have just been treating the symptoms with repeated antibiotics, antihistamines and decongestants, instead of treating the problem,” Combs says. “It is also my belief that allergies are the second-leading cause of reflux after stress.”

“The number one cause of chronic sinus issues is allergy,” Combs says. “Most people who suffer from sinus problems don’t

even realize what it’s like to be normal; they are just happy when they are not miserable. Having chronic sinus problems sucks the life out of you, leaving you a shell of the person you could be.”

When a person has inhaled allergies, there are typically three bodily responses. “The first is the inside of the nose swells, so no more allergens can come in,” Combs says. “Then you can’t breathe through your nose. The second is the nose starts to itch, so people sneeze or rub their nose or eyes. The third is to turn on the water so the allergen gets washed out.” Those allergy responses are what cause sinus problems, as they stop your nose from working properly.

“Before the age of two, most allergies are food allergies,” Combs says. “At age four, the food allergies and inhaled allergies are about equal. At age six, most food allergies resolve and inhaled allergy problems increase to more than 95 percent of allergies.”

The allergies that happen in adults typically happen in the third decade of life. "Adults can't seem to breathe through their mouth all night and have a good day the next day. We have one night like that and we're shot. It takes days to recover," Combs says.

Treatment is based on severity of symptoms with avoidance being the first step, if possible. Second is medication management, but often, the relief from allergic sinus problems comes from treating the allergies with allergy shots.

The Denton Combs Center for Excellence in Care is located at 5124 S. Western Avenue, Suite #4, just south of 57<sup>th</sup> Street and Western Avenue in Sioux Falls.



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