

### Information for Patients

Surgery (an operation) to relieve the symptoms of chronic sinusitis (also known as chronic rhinosinusitis) is only appropriate for very few people. Medical evidence tells us that, for most people, alternative treatments are more effective. In those few people who really need surgery, an operation using a small telescope in the nasal (nose) cavity to open the sinuses may improve their symptoms.

### About the condition

The nasal sinuses are air-filled spaces in the face and head. They produce mucous that drains into the nose. Chronic sinusitis is swelling of the nasal sinuses that lasts for longer than 12 weeks. It is a common condition that affects about one in ten adults. Symptoms include a blocked nose, discharge from the nose, changes to the sense of smell and pressure or pain in your face. Blockage in the sinuses can be caused by infections, inflammation or allergies.

### What are the **BENEFITS** of the operation?

For a small number of people, surgery to the sinuses will improve their symptoms.

### What are the **RISKS**?

There is a risk that the operation will not improve your symptoms and you will still need to take treatments (medical therapy). The risks of this type of endoscopic (telescope) operation include bleeding, infection, scar tissue formation, injury around the eye and, very rarely, a risk of meningitis.

### What are the **ALTERNATIVES**?

Medical treatments are effective for most people. These include nasal washes with salt water, nasal steroid sprays and possibly a course of oral steroids. You can discuss these alternatives with your doctor or pharmacist so you can decide what is best for you.

### What if you do **NOTHING**?

You will avoid an operation and the risks the operation carries. It is likely that your symptoms will continue if you do nothing.

For more information see [Sinusitis \(sinus infection\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

You can find out more about the [Evidence Based Interventions](#) programme online