

Diagnosis of sinusitis

Purulent nasal discharge AND nasal obstruction or facial pressure

no — Have the symptoms been present >4 weeks? — yes

Complete Sinusitis CPM

Consider subacute or chronic sinusitis; Refer to ENT

To diagnose acute bacterial sinusitis (ABS), patient must fall into at least **ONE** of the clinical presentation categories below

SEVERE	Temperature ≥ 102.2 °F (39 °C), facial pain/pressure, and purulent nasal discharge for 3 consecutive days
WORSENING	New or worsening sinusitis signs and symptoms AFTER initial improvement or following URI that has lasted ≥ 7 days
PERSISTENT	Purulent nasal discharge AND facial pain or nasal obstruction without improvement for ≥ 10 days

no — Does patient meet ≥ 1 of the 3 ABS presentations? — yes

Acute **VIRAL** sinusitis likely

Acute **BACTERIAL** sinusitis likely

Treat acute VIRAL sinusitis symptoms

- Recommend symptomatic therapy*
- Instruct patient to return if symptoms worsen or persist ≥ 10 days

Treat as acute BACTERIAL sinusitis (see pg 2)

*Symptom relief checklist [Ages \(12-18\) / Spanish](#)

Treatment of acute bacterial sinusitis

Adult patient with acute bacterial sinusitis

Discuss symptom relief and treat according to clinical presentation

SEVERE

WORSENING

PERSISTENT

Primary antibiotics†

amoxicillin-clavulanate:
875 mg amoxicillin orally
2 times per day for 5 days

†If patient is allergic to penicillin use doxycycline OR cefdinir

Complete Sinusitis CPM

If needed

Watchful waiting only

Watchful waiting + delayed antibiotic prescription

Instruct patient to contact doctor or fill delayed prescription if worse in 2–3 days or if no improvement in 5–7 days

Primary antibiotics for use if worsening or no improvement during watchful waiting period*

amoxicillin: 1000 mg orally 2 times per day for 5 days

*If patient allergic to penicillin use doxycycline OR cefdinir

If needed

Secondary antibiotic choice if needed (Choose ONE)

doxycycline: 100 mg orally 2 times per day for 7 days

cefdinir: 600 mg orally once daily for 7 days