

There's no reason why you should put up with sinusitis

MANY people suffer from sinusitis. In the United States alone, about three in 1,000 people are affected by sinusitis. And the numbers are increasing every year.

Sinusitis is an infection of the sinuses.

Each person has four pairs of sinuses, which are small mucous-lined air-filled pockets within the facial bones surrounding the nose.

An acute sinus infection typically lasts between three to eight weeks.

With sinusitis, there is an aching sensation in the face, blocked nose with pus (yellow mucus) discharge, bad breath, a non-productive cough (no phlegm) and/or fever, according to Dr Kevin Soh, consultant ear, nose and throat surgeon at the Gleneagles Medical Centre.

Just like bronchitis, sinusitis can

develop from a bout of influenza.

As influenza infects the upper respiratory system, causing inflammation and swelling of the air passages, the infection can spread to the sinuses.

Mucus build-up can also cause a blockage in the small openings from the sinuses to the nose and create optimum conditions for bacteria to multiply and cause an infection.

Sinusitis can also develop from an allergic reaction, especially when a person already suffers from allergic rhinitis (runny nose due to temperature changes, pollen, dust, smoke, chemicals and house dust mites, etc).

Because sinusitis can cause coughing when a person is lying down, the sufferer may have trouble sleeping.

This sleep impairment, over a period of time, can affect daytime functioning, and intellectual capabilities

will be negatively affected.

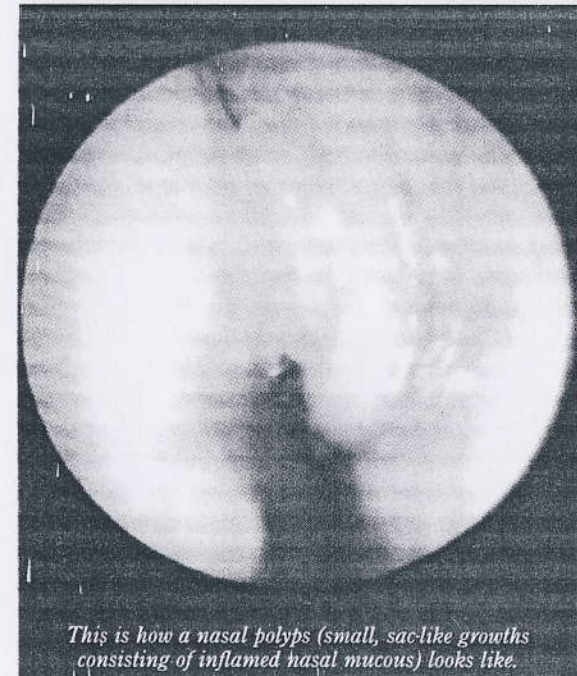
Fortunately for sufferers, there is a cure. Dr Soh said that most cases of sinusitis can be cured by antibiotic treatment for infections and medication to thin the mucus, decongestants to open up the sinus openings and steroids to reduce the inflammation.

It is also possible to prevent sinusitis after a bout of influenza.

Dr Soh advised that one should always seek medical help to treat the flu. However, if sinusitis develops, it is also possible to prevent chronic sinusitis.

Simply follow your doctor's instructions and finish the course of antibiotics and medication prescribed.

For some, the discomfort can be lessened by having a humidifier in the room to help ease breathing difficulties. — *Rachel Lo*



This is how a nasal polyps (small, sac-like growths consisting of inflamed nasal mucous) looks like.