

## Possible Complications & Risks

As with any surgery, you run a slight risk of infection and bleeding. With open surgery, your risks also may include scarring and numbness in your teeth. Your doctor will discuss any additional risks, which differ depending on the type and location of your surgery.

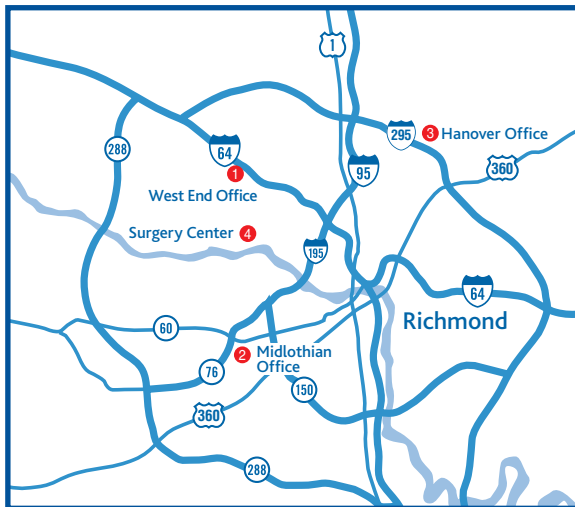
## Physicians

Our physicians are certified by the American Board of Otolaryngology. Otolaryngologists are head and neck surgeons who diagnose and treat disorders of the ear, nose, throat and related structures of the head and neck.

## Additional Information

For online information about your physician, directions to our office or additional information on sinus disease and treatment, please visit our website, [www.VirginiaENT.com](http://www.VirginiaENT.com). To learn more about sinus issues, visit [www.entnet.org](http://www.entnet.org).

This brochure is for your information regarding surgery, but should not be considered medical advice except in conjunction with a consultation with your physician.



## Locations

- 1. West End Office**  
3450 Mayland Court  
Richmond, Virginia 23233
- 2. Midlothian Center**  
161 Wadsworth Drive  
Richmond, Virginia 23236
- 3. Hanover Office**  
7485 Right Flank Road, Suite 210  
Mechanicsville, Virginia 23116
- 4. Virginia Ear, Nose & Throat Surgery Center**  
402 Westhampton Station  
Richmond, Virginia 23226

## Physicians

Clifton C. Hickman, M.D., F.A.C.S.  
Michael R. Perlman, M.D., F.A.C.S.  
Nicholas G. Tarasidis, M.D., F.A.C.S.  
James C. Tyson, M.D.  
Robert J. Brager, M.D.  
Jin S. Lim, M.D.  
Alan J. Burke, M.D.  
Thomas C. Robertson, M.D.  
Peter L. Rigby, M.D.  
Daniel J. Van Himbergen, M.D.  
David R. Salley, M.D.

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Pediatric & Adult Otolaryngology  
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Voice, Speech & Swallowing Disorders  
Sleep Apnea & Snoring Treatment  
Allergy Testing & Treatment  
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For an appointment please call:

**(804) 484-3700**

For more information visit:

**VirginiaENT.com**

# Treating Problem Sinuses



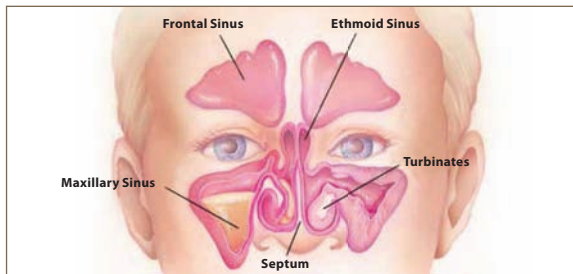
*Setting the standard for excellence in ear, nose and throat care.*

## Do you have sinus problems?

You may never think about your sinuses until a problem develops. Pain, pressure and congestion may prompt you to seek relief. Usually the cause is a cold, infection, allergies or nasal obstruction – all of which can clog your sinuses, preventing them from draining the way they should.

## What are sinuses?

Your sinuses are empty chambers between the bones in your head. Filled with air, they resonate, or vibrate, aiding speech. Just as your mouth produces lubricating saliva, healthy, clear sinuses constantly produce and drain mucus. Interference with the natural drainage of mucus may lead to sinusitis (sinus inflammation and infection). You can have either acute sinusitis (an immediate sinus attack) or chronic sinusitis (more long-term sinus problems).



## Signs of Sinus Problems:

- Colds that linger and worsen after seven to ten days.
- Long lasting nasal drainage; or drainage that is yellow or green.
- A nasal obstruction such as a deviated septum (a crooked partition in your nose), often the result of injury.
- Blockage on one side caused by a polyp (sac of swollen tissue), often the result of an allergy or infection.
- Recurring allergies with symptoms that come and go with the seasons.
- A reaction to substances such as a pollen.

## Treatment Options

Our otolaryngologists (ear, nose and throat specialists) are skilled at evaluating sinus problems and, depending on the severity, will likely recommend one of several courses – allergy testing and treatment, medication, or surgery.

## Your Examination

Your doctor will review your medical history to pinpoint symptoms and their cause. Next, an exam will assess your ability to breathe through your nose. The doctor may use a nasal endoscope (a very thin fiber-optic tube) to see into sinus openings, looking for a deviated septum, polyps or signs of infection. Your doctor will examine your ears and throat as well.

You also may be required to have a CT Scan – a special x-ray that gives a clear, cross-sectional view of the middle meatus and sinus linings – to reveal the precise extent of blockage.

## Diagnosis

If the diagnosis is acute sinusitis, your treatment is to reduce congestion using nasal sprays, nose drops or oral decongestants. An oral antibiotic may be prescribed if bacterial sinusitis is suspected.



If you have chronic sinusitis combined with allergy symptoms, you may be referred to an allergist in our group for specialized tests to identify your specific allergies. Allergies can be treated with allergen avoidance methods, antihistamines to suppress the reactions, and/or immunotherapy with injections or sublingual drops to desensitize the immune system to the offending allergen.

Your doctor will prescribe an antibiotic to treat any bacterial infection and reduce inflammation narrowing the sinus opening. If these treatments are not effective, sinus surgery may correct the problem.



## Sinus Surgery & Recovery

If surgery is recommended, we can schedule the surgery and assist you with any necessary insurance pre-authorization. Sinus surgery is an outpatient procedure.

Once your surgery is scheduled, you will be given preoperative and postoperative instructions. On the morning of surgery, the anesthesia care team will administer and monitor general anesthesia, and your surgeon will proceed with Functional Endoscopic Sinus Surgery (FESS) to clear blockage, remove polyps and widen sinus openings. Endoscopic surgery allows your surgeon direct visual access to the sinus openings.

Our physicians are trained in balloon sinuplasty, a cutting edge surgical technique that widens the openings of your sinuses with very little trauma to surrounding structures. This advanced technique results in shorter recovery times and has been shown to have long lasting effects.

Image Guidance may be used to navigate surgical instruments for severe forms of chronic sinusitis, and in cases when previous surgery has altered anatomical landmarks or when a patient's sinus anatomy is very unusual. This technology is a near-3D mapping system that combines CT scans and real-time information to precisely position instruments using infrared signals.

Endoscopic sinus surgery leaves no external scars, causes minimal swelling and only mild discomfort. You can return to normal activities after one week. Full recovery takes about four weeks.