



## **Facts about Chronic Rhinosinusitis**

### ***What is Chronic Rhinosinusitis (CRS)?***

“Chronic rhinosinusitis” is the name given to inflammation within the nose and sinuses which results in recurrent or persistent sneezing and nasal discharge but for which no cause can be diagnosed. Therefore, CRS is a diagnosis of *exclusion*, meaning that other causes of chronic nasal discharge- tumors, polyps, dental disease, fungus, and foreign bodies- must be ruled out, if possible, before settling on this diagnosis.

The most popular theory explaining CRS is that it results from long-term viral infection within the sinuses. For some reason the cat’s body is unable to clear the infection, and the virus causes permanent cellular damage to the lining of the sinuses. This leaves the sinuses more susceptible to other infections, including by bacteria that normally live within the nose. Again, this is a theory, not a proven fact.

### ***What are the signs of CRS?***

The primary sign of CRS is persistent or recurrent discharge from the nose that often contains mucus or blood. Other common signs can include sneezing, noisy breathing, and discharge from the eyes. Less frequent signs include coughing, facial discomfort, breathing through the mouth, a reduced appetite, or vomiting.

### ***How is CRS transmitted?***

The cause of CRS is unknown, so its rate and risk of transmission are also unknown.

If it is caused by viral infection, as popular theory suggests, then its risk of transmission between cats would depend on the type of virus and the immune system capabilities of the exposed cat. For this reason it is recommended that all cats housed with a cat with CRS receive regular vaccination against feline herpes virus and feline calicivirus.

There is no evidence that CRS can be transmitted to people, dogs, or animals other than cats.

### ***Treatment and Management***

- There is no cure for CRS. Instead, its symptoms are managed in a number of ways:
  - Medical care can include antibiotics, sinus flushing under anesthesia, humidification of the environment, L-lysine supplementation, steroid



therapy, antihistamines, anti-inflammatory drugs, immune modulating drugs, and nasal drops or inhalants.

- Surgery may be a possibility for cats who are severely affected and do not respond to medical treatment.
- Appetite stimulants and feeding warmed, aromatic foods can help cats who suffer from lack of appetite.
- Regular trips to the veterinarian will be necessary to adapt therapy as needed, keep vaccines up-to-date, and monitor for any treatment side effects.

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