

MAXILLARY SINUS : AN ENIGMA IN HEALTH AND DISEASE

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INTRODUCTION

The presence of the paranasal sinuses are characteristic features of the placental animals. The paranasal sinuses are intraosseous pneumatic cavities which occur as bilateral structures communicating with the nasal cavities. Several of the skull bones that form the boundaries of the nasal cavities are hollowed out by contained spaces, called paranasal sinuses. The name of the four sinuses are derived from the bones in which they are housed. Accordingly, they are known as the ethmoidal, the frontal the maxillary and the sphenoidal sinuses.

The maxillary sinus which is also known as the antrum of Highmore, is the largest of all the paranasal sinuses, the first to develop and perhaps the most troublesome of all the paranasal sinuses. Because of its anatomical proximity to the oral structures, it is of importance to the dental surgeon.

The antrum usually considered a no man's land, often constitutes a meeting ground for a dental surgeon and an otorhinolaryngologist. Oral lesions may extend into the antrum and antral pathologies may encroach the maxillary alveolar process. Because of the close proximity of the antrum to the dental apparatus, symptoms arising from either of them can be