



LCIAD Information sheet: 09

What is a sinus augmentation and what do I need to know?

A digital copy of this document is also available on our website <https://www.lciad.co.uk/patient-dental-information-sheets/>

This information sheet contains generic information and must be read in conjunction with your personalised treatment plan, which gives specific advice.

1. General information

A sinus lift (also known as a sinus graft or sinus augmentation) is a dental surgical procedure to increase the volume of the bone available in the upper jaw molar region for placement of dental implants.

It is required when there is inadequate bone height and volume to replace teeth with dental implants in the upper back jaw area under the airspace of the maxillary sinus.

2. What does the procedure involve?

The procedure is a surgical procedure carried out in the dental surgery under local anaesthetic.

It involves lifting the gum under the cheek, making a window in the bone under the gum inside the mouth just underneath the base of your cheekbone, gently lifting the delicate lining membrane of the sinus and placing a proprietary bone scaffold grafting material under the membrane. This is normally bovine(cow-derived) pure mineral particles which will gradually be filled by your own bone over about 8-12 months and will maintain its volume in place over many years as part of your bone.

The graft material is contained by means of a porcine (pig-derived) collagen membrane that is tacked the underlying bone surface by tiny titanium tacks before the gum is closed over the area and sutured. The gum will heal in around 10-14 days but the graft will need to mature for most of a year before implants can be placed.

Sometimes, implants can be placed at the same time as the sinus lift procedure if there is sufficient bone volume to anchor them but inadequate volume for long term stability of the implants.

We use exclusively proven [Botiss](#) biomaterials.



3. How will I feel afterwards

Postoperatively any discomfort is comparable to having implants or an extraction. Care needs to be taken to ensure that pressure changes between the nose and sinuses are kept to a minimum. This means that we recommend you do not fly, swim, blow your nose, stifle sneezes or play a wind instrument for at least 2 weeks following the procedure. There may occasionally be some bleeding from the nose for the first 2-3 days or so after surgery. This is normally minor and self-limiting.

Due to the nature of the surgery, it is common to have some facial bruising after the procedure. This is highly variable but can be quite colourful and occasionally even extend down the neck or under the eye. This is purely due to the arrangement of your facial tissues rather than any trauma, indeed the procedure is, by its nature, very delicate.

4. How successful is it and what complications may occur?

The success rate of sinus augmentation is very high and is recommended for patients lacking teeth and bone in the upper molar region as a basis for placement of dental implants. We have been carrying out this procedure at LCIAD since 1998 and have been teaching the technique to other colleagues through LCIAD Academy since 2005 assisted by consultant ENT surgeon colleagues.

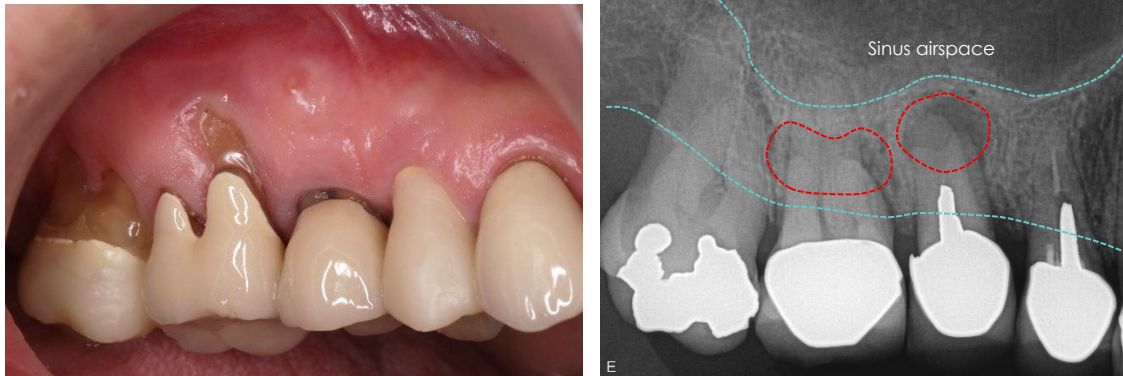
The most common complication is tearing of the delicate membrane inside the sinus during the procedure. This, in itself, is not a significant issue but it is important that the graft material can be contained. Small tears are routinely addressed but a significant tear may result in our having to abandon the procedure and return in 3 months or so to repeat. This occurs in around 1 in 30 cases.

Sinus infection after a sinus lift procedure is rare and tends to occur in smokers or in patients with a history of previous sinus infection. We will always take a CBCT scan of the sinuses to ensure that the sinuses are healthy before we start. An infection normally requires re-entry to remove the grafting material and allowing the area to heal before re-attempting in three months. To put this into perspective, to date at start of 2026 we have had three documented cases where this has occurred since 2008.

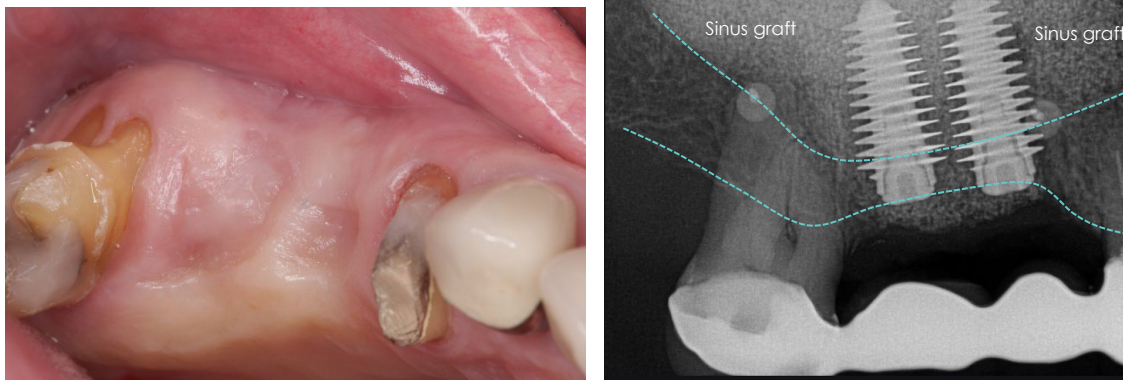
The case below shows the before and after results – surgery photos are omitted but cases with photos and video are available upon request if you would like more information on the procedure.



2017 – the middle two teeth are being lost due to infection (red).



2018 – After tooth extraction and healing there is no bone thickness available for implant placement under the sinus (turquoise lines). The implants are anchored in a small amount of bone and the lower half of the sinus filled with bone graft material around the implants.



2025 – 6 years after restoration and function of the implants within the graft, the sinus graft is perfectly integrated into the surrounding bone and the bone and tissue volume have been restored and maintained.



© LCIAD 2026: This information sheet contains generic information and must be read in conjunction with your personalised treatment plan, which gives specific advice.