

Septo/Rhinoplasty (Nose Surgery) Post-Operative Instructions

What supplies do I need to buy before the procedure?

- Vaseline®
- Gauze Pads
- Q-tips®
- Hydrogen Peroxide 3%
- Saline Nasal Spray
- Afrin® Nasal Spray
- NeilMed® Sinus Rinse (If this is prescribed, follow your doctor's instructions. They will tell you when to start)
- Ice Packs (You may make some at home, please see other hand out sheet)

How should I prepare for surgery?

- Stop smoking cigarettes 6 weeks before surgery.
- Stop Afrin® Nasal (generic name Oxymetazoline HCL 0.05%) sprays 4 weeks before surgery.
 - Stop all other nasal sprays 2 weeks before surgery. Please check with your doctor when you may resume your nasal spray(s).
- Stop chewing tobacco 4 weeks before surgery.
- No alcohol 24 hours before surgery.

What are my post-operative instructions?

General rules

- Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Follow a balanced diet.

- Exercising less may lead to constipation, so you may want to add raw fruit to your diet, and drink more fluids.
- Take pain medication as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin, unless approved by your surgeon.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
- Even when not taking pain medications, avoid alcohol for 3 weeks after surgery as it causes fluid to build-up in your body.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these supplements as tolerated.
- Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

What should my activity level be?

- Start walking as soon as possible. This helps reduce swelling, lowers the chance of blood clots or pneumonia and lowers the risk of constipation.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any prescribed pain medications (narcotics/opioids).
- Avoid travel by airplane 5 days after surgery (or until cleared by your doctor).
- Return to work in 1-2 weeks.
- Avoid the following for **1 week** after surgery:
 - Hard chewing
 - Lifting heavy objects (over 10 pounds)
 - Bending at the waist
- Avoid any physical exercise that can cause overheating for **2 weeks**
- Avoid Swimming for **1 month**
- Avoid the following for **2 months** after surgery:
 - Diving
 - Body contact sports
 - Hitting or rubbing your nose
 - Sunburn

When you get home from surgery:

- Keep your head elevated with 2-3 pillows while sleeping for the first 2 nights after surgery. You may want to sleep in a recliner.
- Use ice packs the first 48 hours after surgery to decrease swelling. Put the ice packs on your cheeks and **not** directly on your nose. (Please see ice pack instructions)
- Change the gauze underneath your nose as needed. Bleeding should decrease over the first 24 hours.
 - If you are needing to change the nasal dressing more than once every 10-15 minutes, spray Afrin® (generic name: Oxymetazoline HCL 0.05%) into both nostrils and relax.
 - If the bleeding continues for 5 minutes, or if you are seeing blood clots, or you begin to swallow blood, please contact our office Monday-Friday 9am-5pm at (734) 432-7634. During afterhours and weekends please call the on-call doctor at (734) 936-6267.
 - For very severe bleeding, call 911 or go to your local emergency department.
- Clean the incision between the nostrils with half peroxide and half water three times per day for 3 days.
- Apply petroleum ointment (Vaseline®) to the incisions to help soften crusts for 3 days.
- When showering, please only use warm water. (Hot showers can cause the cast to fall off or cause the nose to bleed more). Avoid getting the cast wet in the shower.
- If and when directed by your surgeon, you should start using nasal saline irrigations (NeilMed®) three times per day for 6 weeks. (Please see NeilMed® instructions)
- Use nasal saline sprays (for example: Ocean® nasal spray) every 4 hours while awake in each nostril. You do not need to wake up at night to use these. Use the nasal saline sprays for 2 weeks.

- Do not blow your nose for 2 weeks. After 7-14 days when your nasal splints are removed, you may gently blow your nose if you are cleared by your doctor (2 weeks after surgery).
- When you sneeze, open your mouth to avoid pressure through the nose for 2 weeks.
- Try to eat a light, soft meal as tolerated for your first meal, and avoid gas stimulating foods.

What follow-up care will I receive?

- If you have nasal packing, it will be removed after a few days.
- If you have a nasal cast or nasal splints, it will be removed in 5-10 days. Please take Motrin® or Tylenol® before your first post-op appointment.
- All other sutures either melt away by themselves or will be removed in 5-10 days.
- Follow-up visits will be scheduled at the discretion of your surgeon.

How should I expect to feel?

- You may be moving in 2 days, but it will be several weeks before you are entirely recovered.
- After surgery, particularly during the first 24 hours, your face will feel puffy.
- Moderate bleeding from the nose is normal and may last for several days.
- Expect to feel minimal to moderate pain. Your nose may ache and you may have a dull headache.
- Temporary swelling and bruising around eyes and nose will increase at first, then peak after 2 or 3 days. Most swelling and bruising should disappear within 2-3 weeks. Some subtle swelling (noticeable only to you) will remain for several months.
- Healing is a slow and gradual process, some numbness may be present around the operative areas.
- You may experience some discomfort with breathing.

- Swollen nasal tissues may cause the nose to seem “stuffed up” for several weeks.

What other changes will I need to make?

- Do not use facial makeup on incisions until advised by your surgeon.
- You can wear contact lenses if you are not having eye irritation, but do not wear glasses until your nose is completely healed (approximately 2 months) or until you are cleared by your doctor.
 - After your nasal cast is removed, you may need to wear a nasal shield between the eyeglasses and the nose. Please ask your surgeon if a nasal shield is necessary. (You can purchase a shield from our office).
- Please check with your surgeon when you can re-start using your C-PAP.
- Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock if sun exposure is unavoidable. (SPF 30 or greater).

What will my nose look like?

- Your nose will look better in 2-3 weeks and usually continues to improve for many months.
- The final nasal tip results will typically take 6 months to 12 months.
- Final results may not be apparent for 1 year or more.

When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor if you notice any of the symptoms below:

- Increased swelling or bruising.
- Worsening swelling and redness that persist after a few days.
- Increased redness along the incision.
- Severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- Any side effects to medications including; rash, nausea, headache, vomiting, diarrhea.

- Oral temperature over 101 degrees.
- Yellowish or greenish liquid from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- Bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- Loss of feeling or motion.
- Nosebleed or any other unusual symptoms.

In the event of life-threatening bleeding, you should call 911 or go to the emergency department.

What is the contact information?

- Monday - Friday, 9:00am - 5:00pm:
 - Call: (734) 432-7634
- After hours and on weekends:
 - Call Hospital Paging at (734) 936-6267 and ask for the ENT Doctor on call.

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