

## **SEPTORHINOPLASTY** **Post Operative Instructions**

Nurse Line (8:30am to 5pm)  
Emergency After Hours Line

**937-496-0261**  
**937-496-2600**

### **The Surgery Itself**

Septorhinoplasty and turbinate reduction involves general anesthesia, typically for about 2-3 hours. Patients may be sedated for several hours after surgery and may remain sleepy for the better part of the day. Nausea and vomiting are occasionally seen, and usually resolve by the evening of surgery - even without additional medications. Almost all patients can go home the day of surgery.

### **After Surgery**

- You may have soft plastic splints in your nose and a hard splint over the bridge of your nose for 5-7 days following surgery. These will be removed about a week after surgery. Splints inside your nose will make breathing through your nose difficult. A humidifier or vaporizer can be used in the bedroom to prevent throat pain with mouth breathing. You can shower with the cast on starting the day after surgery but don't scrub your face.
- Many patients have bruising under the eyes and swelling of the nose and face. This will resolve slowly over the 2 weeks following surgery. Using Arnica Montana (gel or tabs) will help prevent some of this and make the bruising resolve more quickly. Keep cold packs on eyes until bedtime, changing pads every 20-30 minutes for the first several days after surgery. It is the weight of the cold pack as well as the temperature that helps minimize bruising. A small bag of frozen peas or corn may also be used. Make sure the bag is not placed directly on the skin. Use a washcloth or towel between the bag and your skin.
- Bloody nasal drainage is normal after this surgery for 5-7 days, usually decreasing in volume with each day that passes. Drainage will flow from the front of the nose and down the back of the throat. Make sure you spit out blood drainage that drips down the back of your throat to prevent nausea/vomiting. You will have a nasal drip

pad/sling with gauze to catch drainage from the front of your nose. The dressing may need to be changed frequently during the first 24 hours following surgery. In case of profuse nasal bleeding, you may apply ice to the bridge of the nose and pinch the nose just above the tip and hold for 10 minutes; if bleeding continues, contact the doctor's office.

- You will notice facial pressure and fullness as a result of the nasal splints, similar to a mild sinus infection.
- Frequent hot showers or spraying nasal saline in your nose will help break up congestion and clear any clot or mucus that builds up within the nose after surgery. You can use hydrogen peroxide mixed 1:1 with tap water on a Q tip to clean blood/scabs from your nostrils and incision. Do not pull at the splints or the thin blue suture holding them in place.
- It is more comfortable to sleep with extra pillows or in a recliner for the first week after surgery until the drainage begins to resolve.
- Do not blow your nose for 2 weeks after surgery.
- Avoid lifting > 10 lbs. and no vigorous exercise for 2 weeks after surgery. Avoid any activity that may result in nasal trauma for 3 months after surgery (contact sports like basketball, football, etc.). Be careful to avoid bumping your nose after surgery- it will be very painful and could move the healing nasal bones. Toddlers and larger dogs are notorious for accidental "head-butting" so try to avoid close facial contact.
- Avoid airplane travel for 2 weeks following sinus surgery; the cabin pressure changes can cause pain and swelling within the nose/sinuses.
- Sense of smell and taste are often diminished for several weeks after surgery. There may be some tenderness or numbness in your upper front teeth, which is normal after surgery.

## **Medications**

- Pain medication is often (but not always) prescribed. Pain and pressure in the nose is expected after surgery. As the surgical site heals, pain will resolve over the course of 1-2 weeks. Pain medications can cause nausea, so take with food. **IT IS OK TO TAKE OVER THE COUNTER PAIN MEDICATION (IBUPROFEN, NAPROXEN, or ACETAMINOPHEN) IN ADDITION TO YOUR PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS. DO NOT TAKE ASPIRIN UNLESS CLEARED WITH YOUR SURGEON.**
- Limit Acetaminophen/Tylenol to less than 4,000mg/day
- Limit Ibuprofen/Motrin to less than 3,600mg/day
- You may be given an antibiotic after surgery to prevent infection. Take this medication with food to prevent nausea or vomiting.
- Oxymetazoline nasal decongestant spray (Afrin, sinex) can be used up to 2 times a day for up to 5 days after surgery to reduce bloody drainage. This is usually provided by the hospital after surgery. **DO NOT TAKE FOR MORE THAN 5 DAYS AFTER SURGERY.**
- Your doctor may provide you with saline nasal spray (or flushes) to use after surgery as well to keep your nose moist and to clear blood clots. Follow your specific doctor's instructions.
- Take all of your routine medications as prescribed, unless told otherwise by your surgeon. **Any medications that thin (like ASPIRIN) the blood should be discussed with your surgeon.**
- Arnica Montana (which can be purchased at health food store, GNC) will help reduce bruising and swelling after surgery. If you decide to take this, start 4 days before your surgery and take 3 with each meal. Don't take any the day of surgery. Starting the day after surgery, take 3 with each meal for 7 more days. You may also use Arnica gel (Arnicare) under the eyes.

## **Final Result**

Following a rhinoplasty, it takes time for the swelling to subside and for the skin to heal. Most patients return to work one to two weeks following surgery, depending on the degree of privacy one is trying to maintain. At three weeks postoperatively, swelling and bruising may be apparent to you but not to many of your coworkers and closest friends. Final results following a rhinoplasty may not be apparent for 6-12 months following

surgery.