



Nasal or Sinus Surgery

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

INTRODUCTION

Please read and familiarize yourself with these instructions. By following them carefully, you will assist in obtaining the best possible result from your surgery. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions that should arise.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bleeding is usually anticipated after any nasal or sinus surgery and will generally diminish over 2-5 days. If excessive, call the office or answering service for further recommendations (a drip every few seconds is expected, a continuous stream of blood is excessive).
2. Swelling of the outer nose is usually minimal unless a rhinoplasty ("breaking of the outer nose") was performed. In this case expect significant swelling of the soft tissues around the eyes as well as ecchymosis ("black eyes"), which may last for 7-10 days.
3. Expect the nose to be blocked during the first week after surgery – this is due to blood, mucus, and swelling inside the nose. You can try to keep your nose open by tilting your head back and squirting saline solution (available over-the-counter) into the nostrils every 20 to 120 minutes as necessary once bleeding has slowed, but ask your physician specifically if he or she suggests this be done.
4. Head elevation is beneficial after nasal surgery to reduce soft tissue swelling as well as "black eyes." Usually two or three pillows at bedtime will suffice during the first week post-op. An ice pack may be applied intermittently to the outer nose for 1-3 days to ease discomfort, but should never be used if a rhinoplasty was performed as this may disturb the cast. Any external nasal splint or cast should also be left undisturbed and kept dry until removed by your physician (if the cast should fall off, replace it and secure with tape).
5. Medications will be prescribed on an individual basis and may include antibiotics, analgesics, nasal sprays, etc. Please ask your physician or the nursing staff if you have any specific questions concerning dosage, frequency, etc.
6. After surgery, your physician will tell you when to come to the office for a follow-up visit. Internal packing, splints or a cast are generally removed in one week, but may be left in place for shorter or longer periods of time depending upon individual circumstances.
7. Aspirin, Aleve (Naproxen), Vitamin E, or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, Nuprin) should generally be avoided, since these preparations can increase bleeding.

8. Increased levels of physical activity, lifting or strenuous exertion shortly after surgery may increase blood pressure or pulse, leading to excessive bleeding. Generally, overall physical activity should be limited during the first week and may then be resumed after 14 days. Your physician will provide specific recommendations on this issue.
9. In some instances, you may be able to keep your nostrils clean and unimpeded by using hydrogen peroxide to gently remove any clotted blood or mucus. It is also sometimes helpful to apply antibiotic ointment (e.g., Bacitracin) or Vaseline to either nostril to diminish crust build-up. Your physician will advise whether this is suggested after surgery.
10. You may shower or bathe after surgery, but exercise caution if you have a cast in place. If there is an external cast, direct the water below your face.