

Oral Facial Surgery Institute



Post-Operative Instructions for Nasal Surgery

This information is intended to provide you with answers to many of the questions that may arise during your post-op recovery.

SWELLING

Regardless of severity, every operation is followed by swelling of the neighboring tissues. The amount of swelling differs by individual; however swelling of the face most always seems more pronounced. Swelling is also more extensive when both the inside and outside of the nose is operated on. Nasal congestion improves once swelling begins to subside. Swelling tends to peak between the third and fourth day post operatively. This is normal. Minor swelling may be present for several weeks. Remember, the swelling will subside and there are ways you can help this process. We recommend the following:

- Avoid stooping and bending over or lifting heavy objects for at least one week.
- Avoid trauma to your nose following surgery.
- Sleep with your head elevated, under several pillows, for at least one week post surgery or longer if directed by your doctor. Try not to sleep to one side or another. Swelling will increase if blood flow is greater to one side.
- Use cold compresses. Apply a moistened washcloth (not ice) across the nose and covering eyes as much as possible during the first 72 hours following surgery.
- Avoid excessive sun exposure or tanning for one month. Normal exposure is not harmful.
- Do not tweeze the eyebrows for one week.
- Try not to get your bandage wet, especially when bathing. If it becomes loose contact our office.
- By the third day following surgery, you may gently blow or sniff your nose.
- Avoid rubbing the nostrils. This aggravates swelling and could cause infection, bleeding or excess scar tissue build up.
- Call our office if excess bleeding occurs after using a nasal spray, such as Afrin or saline based spray.

DISCOLORATION

Discoloration around the eyes following surgery is normal and will decrease over time. This typically is the most noticeable two or three days post surgery and does not usually last more than a week. The previous instructions for swelling also help discoloration.

HEMORRHAGE

Expect a fair amount of mucous drainage for several days following surgery. This is considered normal and may contain some blood. Contact our office if blood is continuous or profuse. If hemorrhage occurs, go to bed with head elevated and apply cold compresses on your nose and let your doctor know.

PAIN

Typically only mild to moderate pain is experienced after nasal and sinus surgery. Pain may seem worse at night. To alleviate this try cold compresses. Take pain medications as prescribed by your doctor. You may have an occasional headache; this too will decrease as healing continues.

INJURY TO THE NOSE

If hard impact injury to the nose occurs, and damage, bleeding and swelling occur call your doctor.

NASAL BLOCKAGE AND NOSE SPRAYS

It is normal to experience nasal blockage. Saline mist can be used to keep the area moist. Try to avoid sneezing until the bandage is removed. If you must sneeze, let it come out of your mouth like a cough.

CLEANING THE NOSE

You may gently clean the outside of the nose and the upper lip with cotton swabs and hydrogen peroxide. Vaseline or an antibiotic ointment may be applied to the inside of the nostrils and the outside incision as directed by your doctor. After the bandage has been removed, keep the outside of the nose clean. The nose can withstand gentle cleansing at this time. A mild soap such as Neutrogena or Ivory is recommended.

TEMPERATURE

Having a slightly higher body temperature after surgery is normal. If your temperature reaches above 100 degrees call your doctor.

MEDICATIONS

Following surgery, take the medications as directed by your doctor. You should continue any medications you were taking before the operation. Do not take aspirin, aspirin products, ibuprofen, or "arthritis" medications for two weeks following your surgery.

YOUR FIRST POST-OPERATIVE VISIT

If your surgery was at the hospital, please call the office to schedule your post-operative visit (usually in one week) or as directed by your doctor.

RESUMING ACTIVITIES

You may resume physical activity in two weeks or as directed by your doctor. No swimming, gym, tennis, jogging or other strenuous athletic activity for three weeks. No diving, skiing or contact sports for at least two months.

RETURNING TO WORK

Typically you are able to return to work about seven days following your procedure. This can vary and should be discussed with your doctor.