

Instructions for Nasal Surgery Post Operative

INTRODUCTION

The following instructions are based on experience with many nasal plastic surgery operations. They are designed to answer practically every question that may arise regarding the "do's and don'ts" after surgery. You and your family should read these several times to familiarize yourselves thoroughly with them. Attempt to follow them faithfully because those who do generally have the smoothest postoperative course.

SWELLING

Every operation, no matter how minor, is accompanied by swelling of the surrounding tissues. The amount of swelling varies from person to person. It seems more in the face because the features appear distorted. It is usually greater when both the outside and the inside of the nose are involved. Sometimes the swelling will be worse the first or second day and may be more pronounced along the jawline. It is generally worse when you first arise in the morning (proof that it is better to stay up during the day). This is not an indication that something is wrong with your operation. Swelling eventually subsides and your face will return to normal. You can help normal healing in several ways:

1. Stay up (sitting, standing, walking around) as much as possible. Rest when you tire.
2. Avoid bending or lifting heavy things for one week. This may raise your blood pressure and start bleeding.
3. Avoid hitting or bumping your nose.
4. Do not pick up small children.
5. It is best to sleep alone on your back for one to two weeks after your operation. Sleep with the head of your bed elevated until all the dressings have been removed from the nose. To accomplish this, place two to three pillows under the head of the mattress, and one or two on top of it. Try not to roll on your nose.
6. Ice compresses consisting of moistened wash cloths (not an ice bag) applied diagonally across each eye for 20 minutes every two hours during the first two days after surgery are important to decrease swelling.
7. Avoid sunning face for prolonged periods for one month postop. Ordinary exposure is not harmful.
8. Do not tweeze eyebrows for two weeks.
9. When bathing avoid getting the nasal dressing wet. Let us know if it becomes loose.
10. Avoid "sniffing", that is, forcibly attempting to pull air through the nose as if the nose is blocked. This will not relieve the sensation of blockage- it will only cause more swelling.
11. Avoid constantly rubbing the nostrils with a tissue. This will not only aggravate the swelling, it could cause infection, bleeding and the formation of scar tissue inside the nose. Use a moustache dressing if the discharge is excessive. Report any excessive bleeding that persists after pressure and lying down for 15 minutes.
12. Avoid sexual intercourse for two weeks after surgery.

13. Tub bathing or showering can be resumed as soon as the patient feels strong enough to do so. It is best to have assistance on standby the first couple of occasions.
14. Your hair may be washed, with help, four days postop. A blow dryer may be used on the cool setting.
15. Do not resume exercising, running, aerobics or nautilus for two weeks postop. Then begin slowly until usual intensity is reached.

HEMORRHAGE

Whenever the nasal passages are blocked, the nasal glands produce more mucus than usual. Your nose will be blocked from surgery, and you may have more mucus than normal for several days. Do not be concerned if the mucus is blood-tinged. If it is all blood and is flowing profusely, you should apply ice compresses about the neck and face and call the office. You will probably be told to come in. Avoid bending, lifting heavy objects, hitting your nose and removing blood clots, etc. from your nostrils.

PAIN

There is usually little actual pain following Rhinoplasty. You may experience a deep bruised sensation as a result of the post-operative swelling that occurs. This may seem worse at night. Unfortunately, the prescription drugs for pain often cause sensations of lightheadedness', particularly in the immediate postoperative period. It is better to try application of cold compresses before resorting to stronger drugs. Two extra-strength Tylenol are often enough to relieve pain.

NASAL BLOCKAGE AND NOSE DROPS

Nasal blockage is to be expected after Rhinoplasty and will gradually subside over a period of time. You may spray your nose four times a day with Afrin nasal spray. This may be used for up to one week.

CLEANING THE NOSE

Don't blow the nose at all for ten days after surgery. After that, blow through both sides at once-do not compress one side. You may clean the outside of the nose and the upper lip with Q-tip moistened with Peroxide as soon as you come home from the surgery center. Don't run too vigorously. When the bandage has been removed, the outside of the nose may be cleaned twice daily to prevent buildup of oil that is normally produced by the skin. This will help in reducing the swelling and the nose can withstand gentle cleaning at this time.

RESUMING NORMAL ACTIVITIES

After two weeks, you may sleep without the head of the bed elevated. Do not wear clothing that must be pulled over your head until the bandage is removed.

No full intensity swimming, gym or strenuous athletic activity for one month. No diving or waterskiing for two months. NO CONTACT SPORTS FOR TWO MONTHS!!

Avoid sneezing while the bandage is in place. If you must- let it come out like a cough through your mouth.

Eyeglasses can be worn as long as the splint remains on the nose. After it is removed, they must be suspended from the forehead for about six weeks. This can be accomplished by using tape. This is important because the pressure of the glasses may change the contour of the nose. Contact lenses may be inserted the day after surgery.

KEEP A STIFF UPPER LIP

The upper lip is an important area in rhinoplasty surgery since much work is done in this area. Therefore, you should not move it excessively as long as the bandage is in place so that the healing tissues are not disturbed.

1. Avoid excessive smiling and grinning.
2. Don't pull the upper lip down as if putting on lipstick.
3. Apply lipstick with a brush.
4. The upper teeth should be cleansed with toothpaste on a face cloth; the lower teeth may be brushed as usual.
5. Avoid gum or foods that are hard to chew. Soups, mashed potatoes, stewed chicken, hamburger meat or any easily chewable food is permissible. Steaks, French bread, etc. should not be eaten.
6. If you decide to continue to wear a mustache dressing due to excessive mucus drainage, change it no more than twice daily. This has a tendency to move the upper lip and the base of the nose. If the dressing becomes stuck, loosen it with a few drops of peroxide. The best tape to use is Micro pore Paper Tape as it is less irritating to the skin.

INSOMNIA

A sedative can be prescribed if the patient has difficulty sleeping before the dressings are removed.

DEPRESSION

It is not unusual for an individual to go through mild depression 12-36 hours after surgery. Sometimes patients are shocked by their appearance post-operatively. The swelling and discoloration will subside. Being prepared before surgery and keeping busy afterwards is the best way to combat depression.

DISCOLORATION

There may be varying amounts of discoloration about the face. It may become more pronounced for a couple of days postop, but usually does not last more than one week. The same treatments that work for swelling also work for discoloration. You can camouflage it to some extent with makeup.

DRYNESS OF THE LIPS

If the lips become dry from breathing through the mouth, coat them with chap stick, Vaseline or lipstick.

TEMPERATURE

Generally the body temperature does not rise much over 100 degrees following Rhinoplasty. This rise is usually due to mild dehydration. The patient needs to drink more fluids. If you think you have a temperature, check it with an oral thermometer. Report any persistent temperature over 101 degrees.

MEDICATION

When discharged, you will be given prescriptions for an antibiotic and a pain medication. **AVOID TAKING MEDICATIONS ON AN EMPTY STOMACH.** Take the antibiotic as directed. The pain medication need not be filled unless you feel that you need it. Often, extra-strength Tylenol will be sufficient. Use the Afrin nasal spray four times a day for up to one week.

WEAKNESS

It is not unusual for a person who has had anesthetic to feel dizzy or weak, have palpitations or "cold sweats". This gradually clears up in a few days without medications.

RETURNING TO WORK OR SCHOOL

Most patients are able to return to school seven days after surgery when the bandages come off. When you return to work depends on the amount of physical activity and public contact your job involves and the amount of swelling and discoloration you develop. The average patient may return to work 8-10 days after surgery when these factors are minimal.

INJURY TO THE NOSE

Many individuals sustain accidental hits to the nose during the early post-operative period. One need not be concerned unless the blow is hard or if hemorrhage or considerable swelling occurs. Report the incident if you are concerned.

FINALLY

Remember the things you were told prior to surgery, namely:

1. When the bandage is first removed, the nose will appear fat and turned up. This is due to swelling in the nose and upper lip. This will subside to a large extent within a week. It may take up to a year for all swelling to disappear and your nose to reach its final contour.
2. The discoloration will gradually disappear over a period of 7-10 days.
3. The thicker and oilier the skin the longer it takes for swelling to subside
4. The upper lip may appear stiff. It will resolve in a few weeks.
5. The tip of the nose will feel numb. This will also resolve over time.

If you have any further questions, please call the office (717) 728-1700.