



HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS RHINOPLASTY

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

RHINOPLASTY

These instructions should be carefully read and followed. They are designed to answer the most commonly asked questions regarding post-operative care.

ACTIVITY- THE FIRST WEEK

Limit your activity sharply over the first week following surgery. You are encouraged to walk about the house, but to avoid bending over at the waist or picking up heavy objects. If you over exert yourself, bleeding may result. When you rest or sleep, keep your head elevated on 2 or 3 pillows and try to avoid turning on your side. Keep your emotions under control. It is not unusual to feel a bit depressed for a few days after surgery. This quickly passes as you begin to look and feel better. Restrict your diet to plenty of fluids and easily chewed foods. Hard to chew foods, such as steak, should be avoided for a week.

You may carefully clean the nostrils with a cotton swab (e.g. Q-tip) and peroxide 3 times per day. Use saline nasal spray, 2 puffs each nostril, 3 times per day. Immediately afterward, place a bit of Vaseline, Polysporin, Bacitracin or other antibiotic ointment in the nostrils to keep them from drying out. Your nasal passages will be partially obstructed by swelling for at least two weeks. A humidifier may help you sleep by allowing you to breathe through your mouth more comfortably.

Do not blow your nose or sniff excessively as this will only irritate the healing tissues. If you must sneeze, open your mouth. Also, avoid picking up babies or small children; a flailing little arm may strike your nose. You probably will hit your nose at least once during the first week. This will hurt but cause no problem unless the force is excessive.

You may bathe in the tub; avoid showering as you must keep the nasal dressing dry. It is alright to carefully wash your face with mild soap and a clean washcloth or cotton balls.

Avoid cigarette smoking or even being in an area of excessive smoke as this irritates the nasal tissues and impedes healing. Also avoid alcoholic beverages the first week following surgery as this may increase your chances of bleeding.

ACTIVITY-AFTER THE FIRST WEEK

It takes about six weeks for the nasal bones to fully heal. Slowly resume your activity. After the first week, let your body tell you how much to do. Strenuous exercise may be resumed in 4 weeks. Build up to this level slowly. If the doctor has to reset the nasal bones, this will add to your recovery time. Semi-contact sports are to be avoided for 4 to 6 months. Full swimming is allowed after 4 weeks. Do not let our nose become sun-burned. This may result in prolonged swelling and redness.

PAIN, SWELLING AND BRUISING

Most patients complain more of discomfort from nasal sinus congestion than from pain. Any pain should be controlled by the prescribed medication. If not, give us a call. Swelling and bruising about the eyes and cheeks is variable. Swelling maximizes at about 2 days, and then subsides over the next 5 to 6 days. Do not worry if you have excess swelling about the eyes and cheeks. This will clear completely and not adversely affect the result. Bruising (discoloration) may persist a few days longer. Remember, all of this subsides in time and has no bearing on the result.

BLEEDING

It is normal to have some bleeding for the first 24 hours after surgery. It may be necessary to change the gauze drip-pad a dozen or so times over that period. It is normal to have a pinkish-reddish discharge from the nose and throat for the first 3 to 4 days. This will gradually subside. If you have any profuse nasal bleeding after this time, immediately lie down with your head elevated on 3 or 4 pillows. Iced washcloths over the eyes may help. Give us a call at **623-0526** if these measures do not suffice. You will be connected with our answering service if calling after hours or on weekends. Avoid rubbing nostrils with a tissue.

MEDICATIONS

Avoid medications that contain aspirin (see attached list) for 2 or 3 weeks before and after surgery. Pain medications are prescribed. Take them as needed. After the first 24 hours, Extra Strength Tylenol may be sufficient. If the prescribed medications do not control your symptoms, please call us. Nausea may occasionally be related to the above medications. Small amounts of clear fluids at frequent intervals may help. If this is not effective, call us. Itching under the dressing may occur but can be controlled by appropriate medications. Nose drops should **not** be used as they may delay healing.

INFECTIONS

Infection is rare after rhinoplasty, but occasionally does occur. Fever over 100 degrees F., excessive pain, and swelling with redness may signify a developing nasal infection and should be reported.

Infections generally clear up quickly with appropriate antibiotic treatment.

POST-OPERATIVE VISIT

Any sutures and the nasal dressing are removed and the nose is cleansed 6 to 7 days after surgery so you should call our office and make an appointment. When the dressing is removed the nose will be quite swollen and the nasal tip will be turned up. This will settle down considerably over the next 3 to 4 days, then more gradually thereafter. Remember that the nose does not assume its final shape until many months after surgery depending on the type of nasal skin you have. It will probably look better than prior to the operation within 2 to 3 weeks, but the final result takes longer – be patient. Occasionally, an injection is necessary to reduce swelling in an area. These are relatively painless and are done in the weeks following surgery to give the best possible result.

Any touch-up surgery that may be necessary is not done for at least 12 months. This is usually a small office procedure and no physician's fee is charged. There is, however, a nominal charge for our supplies and facilities.

57-623-0526

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