



DALLAS  
ENT  
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## **Sinus and Nasal Surgery Instructions**

Following your procedure, you can expect some or all of the following symptoms:

- Drowsiness immediately following your procedure
- Stiffness
- Nasal drainage (with or without blood)
- Nausea
- Swelling
- Numbness
- Changes in the way your breathing feels through the nose

### **Instructions:**

- Drowsiness:
  - You will be drowsy following surgery—we have given you medication to help make you more comfortable. Expect to doze on and off during the evening. Simply make yourself comfortable when you get home.
- Swelling
  - Swelling is normal and will go down within the first week for most people. You may have some lingering swelling that will take weeks to months to fully subside.
  - Ice packs may be placed over your cheeks every three to four hours for 15-20 minutes the first couple of days. This will help to decrease swelling and discomfort. Use a cool vapor humidifier at your bedside for the first week. This helps loosen secretions and prevent crusting inside the nose.
- Numbness
  - The tip area of your nose will be numb for the first several weeks following surgery. This is normal and as the skin nerves regrow following surgery your sensation will return. Totally normal sensory return in the tip may require several months. After the first 3 weeks, the changes are very slight, very slow, and you may not notice them.
- Stiffness:
  - You may be a little stiff when you first wake up in the morning following surgery. Go ahead and move around without fear of disrupting anything.
- Nausea
  - It is normal to have some nausea following surgery, particularly if you get up and move around too soon. Most nausea will be gone 6-8 hours after surgery. Although we have given you nausea medication prior to, during, and possibly after surgery, these medications are only about 80% effective and you may still experience a bit of nausea. If so, simply relax and do not try to eat any heavy foods—just try some clear liquids.
- Drainage:
  - It is normal to have drainage from your nose which will be tinged with blood for the first 48-72 hours. Usually, the drainage decreases markedly after 24-36 hours and becomes clear. While your nose is swollen and stuffy, try to avoid using nasal sprays such as Afrin or other types of antihistamines, even

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if your nose seems to be draining a lot. Using an antihistamine will clog your nose and it will be very difficult to unclog. Remember that your nose will feel stuffy for a week or two because of the lining and swelling in your nose.

- **DO NOT BLOW YOUR NOSE!** You may sniff secretions to the back of your throat and expectorate them.
- **Blot—DO NOT WIPE—from the end of your nose.** Blowing your nose risks significant bleeding. Abstain from blowing your nose for 2 full weeks and then you may gently start blowing your nose again.
- If you have to sneeze, do so with an open mouth.
- Nosebleed
  - If your nose begins to bleed at any time, try to relax (this is imperative to avoid being overly excited and thus, increasing blood pressure levels).
  - To decrease bleeding, lay down with your head slightly elevated. Use a moist washcloth and apply gentle pressure to the nostril area. By relaxing and holding this pressure for 15-20 minutes, virtually any bleeding will stop.
  - **If you experience a nosebleed with bright red blood that either has a heavy flow or lasts more than 10 minutes, call our office immediately.**
- Sleep:
  - Sleep in a semi-upright position for at least the first two nights to help with drowsiness and swelling. The drowsiness will go away by the evening or the next morning. The day following surgery you may still feel a bit tired, but go ahead and resume your normal activities. Your energy will return more rapidly if you begin to resume normal activity the day following surgery.
- Activity
  - Do not lift or move heavy objects following surgery for two (2) full weeks. This includes lifting children, groceries, backpacks, etc. Gradually work your way up to your usual routine.
  - Avoid any type of aerobic exercise that elevates your pulse above 90 for a minimum of 3 weeks after surgery. When your pulse rises, the accompanying rise in blood pressure can cause bleeding. Gradually resume exercise beginning 2-3 after surgery. Avoid any type of contact sports for a minimum of 4-6 weeks after surgery. During this time, any strong blow to the nose could disrupt the re-contoured nasal bone area. Moderate bumps and blows to the nose will usually not cause disruption.
- Maintenance:
  - a. You may clean the inside of your nose with a Q-tip soaked in hydrogen peroxide to remove the crust and old blood, as this is frequently irritating.
- Nasal Rinse
  - a. If given instructions to do saline nasal spray or water irrigations, you need to start irrigating 48 hours after surgery. Perform the irrigation 2-3 times a day until you are instructed to discontinue. This irrigation will greatly contribute to the healing process.



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### Medication:

- Pain Medication
  - You will be given a prescription for pain medication. Take a pain pill before bed the night of surgery and the next morning (preferably after you have eaten something in order to avoid stomach irritation). If you have any adverse reactions to the pain pills we provide you, you can take extra-strength Tylenol. Pain medication is rarely needed for more than 3-4 days following surgery.
- Antibiotics
  - Infection following any type of nasal or plastic surgery is extremely rare, however you will be given an oral antibiotics to take following your surgery, as a preventative measure. Infection is usually not apparent for several days following surgery. If you notice significantly increased redness or swelling accompanied by tenderness or fever  $\geq 102^{\circ}\text{F}$  at any time, call the office.

### Changes to your nose:

- We have changed the pattern of air flowing through your nose. These changes are to relieve airway obstruction and increase airflow through your nose. Due to swelling, the best improvement in air flow will not be noticeable until swelling decreases two to three weeks following surgery. Do not worry that your breathing feels different through the nose. You will adapt to the new pattern of air flow naturally over a period of weeks.

### If you have any of the following problems call the office immediately:

- Loss of vision
- Double vision
- Black eyes
- Cervical stiffness (you are not able to touch your chin to your chest)
- Fever above  $101^{\circ}\text{F}$
- Severe headaches
- Severely diminished strength
- Nosebleed that is heavy or lasts more than 10 minutes

### Follow-Up

- If your procedure involved the surgeon placing plastic splints into your nose (typically done for a Septoplasty), they will be removed at your first post-op visit- about 1-2 weeks after surgery. You will be able to breathe well through your nose afterwards.

If you have any additional questions or should any problems arise, please contact the office immediately.

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