

Jesse G. Wardlow, MD FACS

Eileen M. Mahoney, MD

Keith M. Lertsburapa, MD



5207 Main St. Suite 5 Downers Grove • 12 Salt Creek Ln. Suite 106 Hinsdale • 15728 S. Rte 59 Plainfield

Phone: 630-981-0032 Fax: 630-241-0884

ENDOSCOPIC SINUS SURGERY (ESS) **POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Nasal Drainage

Right after surgery, you will have drainage from your nose. There may be a small amount of bright red bleeding, but do not be alarmed. A small amount is normal and may continue through the week. A gauze dressing will be placed on your upper lip to absorb this drainage. On the day of surgery it may be necessary to change the dressing several times. Old blood, which accumulated during surgery, is dark reddish-brown. It will drain for a week or more and is of no concern. Drainage may continue for several weeks. The drainage may become thicker and yellow-green in color. This is also normal and is not a sign of infection.

2. Nasal Congestion

For the first 10 days after surgery, your head will feel stuffy. This is due to swelling of the mucous membranes in your nose. This is normal and expected. The stuffiness will gradually decrease over the next few weeks, so please be patient. After this, you should notice an improvement in your nasal breathing. Nasal packing may or may not be left in place after surgery. If you do have this packing, you will need to return in the first few days after surgery to have it removed by your doctor.

3. Discomfort After Surgery

There is some discomfort after surgery. It is more of an ache or pressure, not a sharp pain. This pressure may increase somewhat during the first week. That is due to increased swelling and the accumulation of sinus secretions. If a pain medication is prescribed, take as ordered. If none was ordered, take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Motrin according to package directions. For additional pain relief, place ice packs over your cheeks every three or four hours for 15 to 20 minutes. It may take five to six weeks for full recovery. Please be patient during this time. You may sleep with the head of your bed elevated for the first few nights.

4. Sinus Specific Medications

Take all medications as prescribed by your doctor. Usually, an antibiotic will be ordered to prevent an infection. Decongestants, nasal sprays, and sometimes a mild steroid are

often ordered to aid with healing and comfort.

In addition, you will be given instructions for cleaning your nose. Generally, this is taught at your first post-operative visit. You may be using:

1. "Ponaris," an oil-based nasal spray or Ocean Spray Saline
2. A salt-water nasal irrigation.

Both of these will help to keep the nose clean. To help your nose and sinuses heal faster, clean your nose as instructed and take all medications as prescribed.

Ponaris

If you are to use the Ponaris spray:

1. Call your pharmacy to be sure it has this spray available. You may need to call several pharmacies.
2. Ponaris is a liquid and is packaged with a dropper. Ask the pharmacist to put it in an atomizer so you can use it as a spray. (You can also do this yourself. Pour the liquid into a clean empty nasal spray bottle, such as an empty bottle of Nasacort AQ.)

Salt-water Irrigation

If you are to use salt-water irrigation, we recommend the Neilmed Sinus Rinse.

Directions:

1. Fill up the clean bottle with 8 oz. of **warm** distilled water or previously boiled water. You may warm the water in a microwave. We recommend that you warm it in increments of five seconds. This is to avoid excessive heating of water.
2. Cut the Sinus Rinse™ mixture packet along the dotted line and pour contents into the bottle. Secure the cap with tube on the bottle. Shake the bottle to dissolve the mixture.
3. Standing in front of a sink, bend forward to your comfort level and tilt your head down.
4. Keeping your mouth open and without holding your breath, apply cap snugly against nasal passage and squeeze the bottle gently until solution drains back out (from the same or opposite nasal passage, or mouth). While bending over the sink, consider tilting head sideways to help improve drainage of any residual rinse solution. Do not swallow the solution.
5. Repeat the same procedure on the other side.
6. Squeeze two to three times in each nasal passage, using between 2 to 4 oz. for each nasal passage. Discard any unused solution and make fresh solution for each rinse.
8. After one or two weeks, the liquid should be clear after the flushing.

Note: You may be instructed to use both the Ponaris spray and the nasal irrigation. If so:

1. First, irrigate the nose.
2. Follow with the Ponaris spray.

5. Post-operative Visits

It is very important to keep all appointments after surgery. At these visits, the doctor will clean and examine the operative area. This cleaning prevents scarring. These appointments start four to seven days after surgery. The frequency of the visits varies depending on your rate of healing. As a general rule, you can expect four to six visits during the first one or two months after surgery.

We recommend that you eat before arriving for your appointment. Also, take your pain medication one hour prior to the first visit. If you are taking Tylenol with codeine, have someone drive you. This medication may cause drowsiness.

6. Home Medications

Resume all other prescribed medications except blood thinners (Coumadin, Plavix, etc). In addition, please avoid aspirin. Some supplements also cause bleeding including Vitamin E, fish oil, garlic, ginger, ginkgo biloba, and ginseng. These should be avoided for three weeks after surgery.

Precautions During the First Week

1. Activity

Even though your surgery may seem minor, your body needs additional rest for healing. You should stay at home for one day. If the surgery is done under local anesthesia, you should gradually increase your activities over 3 to 4 days. If general anesthesia is used, increase your activities over a one week period. Most people return to work within 4 to 5 days after surgery.

2. Do Not Blow Your Nose

It is important that you do not blow your nose. Blowing the nose may cause bleeding. You may use nasal saline spray to help loosen crusts. You may gently blow your nose one week after your nasal packing is removed.

3. Sneezing

If you must sneeze, do so with your mouth open. Sneezing through your mouth reduces pressure and discomfort of the operative site.

4. Do Not Lift Heavy Objects

Avoid bending over and lifting heavy objects (over 5 pounds) during the first two weeks after surgery. These activities place pressure on the operative site and may cause bleeding

5. Nosebleeds

Observe for bleeding during the first day. If you have a nose bleed, sit upright, and pinch the lower on-half of the nose together (the soft portion below the bone), for ten minutes by the clock. If you have Afrin or Neosynephrine nasal spray you may use this before pinching the nose. Applying ice packs over the nose may also help. Release and observe. If bleeding continues repeat the same procedure, but hold it for 20 minutes. Call your doctor immediately if you have any bright red bleeding that persists and/or if bleeding is heavy.

Suggestions For Comfort

1. When resting, keep your head elevated on two to three pillows. This position will help you feel more comfortable because it helps to decrease swelling. It also allows for better drainage of nasal discharge.
2. Ice packs may be placed over cheeks every three to four hours for 15-20 minutes. This will help decrease swelling and discomfort.
3. Use a vapor humidifier at your bedside the first week after surgery. This will help loosen secretions and prevent crusting.

4. Take all medications as prescribed.

CALL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. Any vision problems, such as:
 - Loss of vision
 - Double vision
 - Black eyes
 - Bulging of one or both eyes
2. Neck stiffness (you are not able to touch your chin to your chest) in addition to fever, lethargy, and marked headache
3. Fever over 100.4° F (38° C)

***To speak with our office, please call (630) 981-0032 between 8am-4pm (Mon-Fri)**

***For prescription refills please call during office hours with your pharmacy number available**

***For after hours Emergencies, a doctor on call may be reached at (630) 981-0032, or go to your nearest Emergency Room**