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## **SEPTOPLASTY AND/OR TURBINOPLASTY SURGERY** **POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

### **What to Expect After Septoplasty**

#### **1. General Information**

You and your physician have decided that you would benefit from a Septoplasty. Septoplasty is usually an outpatient surgical procedure. This procedure is done through the nose with no external incisions or cutting. The goal of this procedure is to surgically correct a deviation of the inside of the middle of your nose. This will enhance your nasal breathing.

#### **2. 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. If bleeding does occur, place an ice pack over the nose. At the same time, place an ice cube in your mouth; let it melt. **Any bright red bleeding that lasts more than twenty minutes, or is heavy, should be reported to your doctor immediately.** Old blood, which accumulated during surgery, is dark reddish-brown. It will drain for a week or more. It is of no concern.

#### **3. Nasal Congestion**

For the first week 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.

#### **4. Nasal Packing or Splints**

Packing may be removed the day of surgery before you are discharged, or on the first postoperative day. If nasal splints are left in your nose, they will be removed in about 1 week. This packing keeps the nasal septum straight and prevents bleeding. Do not

remove this packing by yourself.

### **5. Discomfort After Surgery**

There is some discomfort after surgery. If a pain medication is prescribed, take as ordered. If none was ordered, take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Motrin according to package directions. **DO NOT TAKE ASPIRIN OR MEDICATIONS WHICH CONTAIN ASPIRIN.** These products may cause bleeding. For additional pain relief, place an ice mask or cool washcloth over your eyes and forehead for the first 24 to 36 hours after surgery. The tip of your nose may be tender to touch. Do not be alarmed. This may last 2-4 weeks following surgery.

### **6. Post-Operative Visits**

You will have 2 to 3 post-operative visits. The purpose of these visits is to clean and examine the operative site. This helps the healing and improves nasal breathing. If packing is left in your nose, it will be removed at your first post-operative visit with minimal discomfort, often on the first postoperative day. If everything is healing well, your last visit will be 10 to 14 days later.

### **7. Other Medications**

You may also be given a prescription for antibiotics. Begin these immediately after surgery. Please finish the entire course of antibiotics. Resume all other prescribed medications except blood thinners ( Coumadin, Plavix, etc.). 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

## **General Precautions**

### **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. 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.

### **3. Do Not Blow Your Nose**

It is important that you do not blow your nose. Blowing the nose may cause bleeding.

You may also use saline nasal spray to loosen crusts. You may gently blow your nose one week after your nasal packing is removed.

**4. Sneezing**

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

**5. 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

**6. Miscellaneous**

Call our office if you have Bleeding, fever of 101 or higher, or you have uncontrolled pain, or swelling around the eyes or face.

**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. Use a vapor humidifier at your bedside the first week after surgery. This will help loosen secretions and prevent crusting.
3. Three times a day, place a “fingertip” of Bacitracin® ointment along the incision in the left nostril. This will help prevent infection.
4. Begin nasal saline irrigations the day after packing removal, or if no packing is in place, start to use it on the first postoperative day. You will be directed to use either Neil-med Sinus rinse, or nasal saline mist, both of which are over the counter. This will help with reducing crusting. If there is excessive crusting, you may use hydrogen peroxide on a Q-tip to soften the crusting inside the lower portion of the nostrils. Do not insert any further than the cotton tip of the Q-Tip. Bacitracin ointment can be applied twice daily in the same manner with a Q-tip to help prevent the build up of crusts.
5. Stay Hydrated, but avoid alcohol or caffeine.

**\*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**