



CORRADO

CENTER FOR FACIAL PLASTIC
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POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS-NASAL SURGERY (Includes: Septoplasty, Nasal Fracture Repair, Nasal Airway Reconstruction)

The following instructions have been designed to answer practically every question that might arise regarding the "do's" and "don'ts" after surgery. You and your family should read these several times to become familiar with them. Follow them faithfully, because those who do generally have the smoothest postoperative course.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Sleep with your head elevated until all of the dressings have been removed from the nose. Use at least 2-3 pillows.
2. Avoid bending over or lifting heavy things for one week. Besides aggravating the swelling, this may raise your blood pressure and start a hemorrhage.
3. Avoid hitting or bumping your new nose. It is wise not to pick up small children.
4. Avoid excessive sunning of the face during the first month after your operation. A sunscreen is always advisable, but a total sunblock is suggested for the first month.
5. Do not tweeze your eyebrows for one week.
6. Avoid any strenuous activity or exercise until cleared by your doctor.
7. No nose blowing until cleared by your doctor.
8. Avoid "sniffing", that is, constantly attempting to pull air through the nose as some people do when their nose feels blocked. This will not relieve the sensation of blockage-it will only aggravate it because the suction created on the inside will cause more swelling.

9. Avoid rubbing the nostrils and the base of the nose with Kleenex or a handkerchief. Not only will this aggravate the swelling, but also it may cause infection, bleeding, or the accumulation of scar tissue inside the nose. Use the "moustache" gauze dressing instead if discharge is excessive. The moustache gauze dressing may have to be changed as often as every thirty minutes. This is no abnormal and will significantly lessen in the next twelve hour periods. You will usually have clear plastic tape on your cheeks with the moustache dressing taped over it. Leave the clear tape in place until you do not need the moustache dressing anymore (usually 24-48 hours). This avoids irritating the skin from frequent moustache dressing changes.
10. Eyeglasses may be worn as long as the metal splint remains on the nose. After the splint is removed, glasses must be suspended from the forehead for a period of about six weeks. If this is not done, the pressure of your glasses may change the contour of your nose. Your glasses can be suspended from the nose after your splint is removed in two ways. One way is to use a piece of tape to hold the glasses on your forehead so that the weight is off your nose. Another alternative is a "noseguard" which your doctor can give you. Contact lenses may be worn the day after surgery.

SWELLING

Every operation, no matter how minor, is accompanied by swelling of the surrounding tissues. The amount varies from person to person. The swelling itself is not serious and is to be expected after your surgery. It sometimes is worse on the second postoperative day than it was on the first, and in the mornings.

DISCOLORATION

It is not unusual to have varying amounts of discoloration about the face. Like swelling, the discoloration may become more pronounced after you have been discharged. It usually lasts not more than a week or two, all the while decreasing in intensity. If the nasal bones were not reshaped, there is usually very little bruising. The measures which will help your swelling subside will also be working to decrease the amount of discoloration. You can camouflage the discoloration to some extent by using a thick makeup base.

NUMBNESS

After surgery you will notice that the tip of your nose feels firm, and it is not uncommon for the nose to feel numb for a short time. If you have incisions inside your nose, you maybe be able to feel minor irregularities in its surface until all swelling disappears.

NASAL SPLINTS AND BLEEDING

For the first 72 hours, nasal splints will be present inside your nose. They are small plastic tubes used to keep your septum in place, but also to allow you to breath. It is not uncommon for them to get clogged with mucus and dried blood. Nasal saline spray can be used after the first 24 hours as needed to help remove any material from the tubes. Gently spray saline in the nose, and never force the spray bottle tip into the nose. We will remove the splints on the third postoperative day. Please be aware that during the postoperative time, you may have some minimal bleeding. Often blood stained mucus coming from the nose will be seen, and this is not unusual. Nevertheless, if you

should find that you are actively bleeding from either nostril, it is important to contact the office as soon as possible. You will also have a splint ("cast") on the outside of your nose. This splint will be removed on the 7th day after surgery. Keep this cast dry when showering and do not remove. You will also have sutures present underneath the tip of your nose, do not pick at them, this will cause scarring.

PAIN

There is usually little actual pain following nasal surgery, but you may experience a deep bruised sensation as a result of the postoperative swelling that occurs. As is usually the case with such thing, this seems worse at night and when one becomes nervous.

The usually prescribed drugs which minimize pain often cause sensations of light-headedness, particularly in the immediate postoperative period. This may seem to make your recovery more tedious. Please take the pain medicine as needed. Do not try to "tough it out" if you are uncomfortable. Pain medications should be taken as needed following the dosing instruction. Be sure to eat prior to taking these medications because they may cause nausea if taken on an empty stomach. You may take Tylenol in place of you pain mediation, but do not take both at the same time. DO NOT take aspirin, ibuprofen, or any other NSAIDs (Non-Steroid Anti-Inflammatory Drugs).

NAUSEA

Sometimes the anesthesia, the pain pills, or swallowed blood will make you nauseated. If this occurs, do not hesitate to use the medication prescribed for nausea.

DEPRESSION

It is not unusual for an individual to go through a period of mild depression twelve to thirty-six hours after surgery. Even though you very much want this surgery, and even though we have tried to tell you what to expect postoperatively, you may be somewhat shocked at seeing your own face swollen and bruised.

This is a very temporary condition which will subside shortly. The best "treatment" is too busy yourself with details of your postoperative care and to try to remember that the recovery period will soon be over.

OTHER MEDICATIONS

Nasal saline can be obtained over the counter. Sealed, pressurized saline spray, such as Simply Saline or Nasamist, is preferred (see below). Bactroban (Mupirocin) ointment will be prescribed to you.

KEEPING A STIFF UPPER LIP

The upper lip is important in nasal surgery, as much work is done in this area. To keep the healing tissues from being disturbed, do not move your upper lip for as long as the bandage is in place.

Avoid excessive smiling.

Avoid pursing the lips, such as in kissing, for ten days.

Do not pull the upper lip down as women do when applying lipstick. Apply lipstick with a brush

CLEANING THE NOSE

You will be instructed to clean the outside of the nose by your doctor on the day of your first postoperative visit. The outside and near inside of the nostrils may be cleaned with a Q-tip moistened with a solution of half warm water, and half hydrogen peroxide. Crusting may be present on the incision directly under the nasal tip or just inside the nostrils. The crusts can be gently wiped away with the moistened Q-tip. Bactroban ointment should then be applied to the incision below the nasal tip and just inside the nose. Twist the Q-tip around inside gently; do not insert the Q-tip deep inside the nose as this can cause bleeding. This will help prevent crusting and help you breathe better. Nasal saline spray can be used after the first 24 hours as needed to help remove any material from the nostrils. Dried blood and mucus can clog up the nose. Gently spray saline in the nose, and never force the spray bottle tip into the nose. Four sprays in each nostril should be used at least 4 times a day, or more frequently as needed to clear the nose. Never pick any clots or debris from inside the nose.

TEMPERATURE

Generally, the body temperature does not rise much above 100 degrees following nasal surgery. This rise usually occurs if the patient becomes slightly dehydrated because he does not drink enough water. Report any persistent temperature above 100 degrees.

WEAKNESS

It is not unusual for a person who has had an anesthetic or any type of operation to feel weak, have palpitations, break out in "cold sweats", or get dizzy. This gradually clears up in a few days without medication.

ANTIBIOTIC

Always finish the full course of antibiotic pills which have been prescribed.

RETURN TO WORK OR SCHOOL

The average patient is able to return to school the day after the external splint ("cast") is removed. That will be at 7 days after your surgery. Returning to work depends on several factors: the amount of physical activity involved in your position, the amount of public contact your job requires, and the amount of swelling and discoloration that you may develop. On the average, you may return to work on the 8th to 10th postoperative day.

INJURY TO THE NOSE

Some individuals sustain accidents during the early postoperative period. You need not be concerned unless the blow is hard enough to cause significant bleeding, swelling, or pain. If a blow is sustained while the metal splint is still on, this should help protect the nose. However, for the first five weeks after the nasal splint is removed, more attention should be paid to any injury to the nose. Blows to the nose can cause the nasal bones to

become deviated. Please report any accident to the office immediately if you feel it was a significant bump. Otherwise, let us know about it at your next visit.

FINALLY

Remember the things you were told before your operation.

When the bandage is first removed, your nose will appear fat and turned up too much. This is caused by the operative swelling over the nose and in the upper lip. The swelling will subside to a great extent during the next week. However, remember that it will take up to one or two years for all the swelling to disappear and for your nose to reach its final contour. The discoloration will gradually disappear over a period of 7-10 days, in most cases. The thicker and oilier the skin, the longer it takes for the swelling to subside.

The upper lip may seem stiff for some time after surgery, and you may feel that this interferes with your smile. Be patient. This will disappear within a few weeks.

The tip of the nose sometimes feels numb after nasal surgery. This will eventually disappear. Occasionally, the upper teeth will have tingling if extensive septal work was necessary. This too will resolve with time.

If you have any questions, please call us at 1-877-481-3223. We are always happy to answer your questions, and if you should have a problem, this number is answered 24 hours a day.