

Postoperative Instructions – Rhinoplasty, Nose Surgery

Rhinoplasty is sometimes performed in conjunction with a chin implant, neck liposuction, or other cosmetic facial procedures to improve the nose and balance the face. Sometimes certain breathing problems related to the internal nasal structures can be corrected at the same time as nose reshaping is performed. Your physician will be able to help you determine whether these structures should be modified along with reshaping your nose.

It is important to realize that the amount of time it takes for recovery varies greatly among individuals. The first couple of days after surgery, you should restrict your activities and sleep with your head elevated. This will help to minimize swelling and reduce the possibility of minor bleeding, which is not uncommon.

Generally, bruising around the eyes and cheeks is most apparent during the first few days following surgery. Most discoloration will disappear within a week. A few days after surgery, you can begin to use makeup, if desired. Noticeable swelling may last for several days. Minor residual swelling may continue for many months, but generally this should not be apparent to others. Packing is rarely used, and easily removed in the office soon after surgery. External stitches, if used, will be removed at 1 week. You may need to continue wearing the nasal splint for up to a week, during which time you should avoid getting it wet.

The goal of rhinoplasty is a nose that looks natural and blends harmoniously with your other facial features. Since the healing process is gradual, you should expect to wait up to one year to see the final results of your rhinoplasty.

A touchup or revision may be desired to further improve the results. If this is the case, plastic surgeons suggest waiting several months to allow proper healing.

Straining, bending, and heavy lifting should be avoided during the early postoperative period. In many instances, you may be able to return to work within a week or ten days after surgery. More strenuous activities, including exercise, can usually be resumed at two weeks.

Your nose will be sun sensitive during recovery, and you must be conscientious about using a sunblock to protect your skin. If the bones of your nose were altered, it may be a number of weeks before you can wear glasses without special support such as tape.

Results can be immediate and dramatic if the nose was very large or if a large bump was removed, but usually the changes are not dramatic. A slight bump or oversized tip can be improved without attracting a great deal of attention. Friends and family may say that they don't see a major difference, but that's okay. Your surgery should improve your appearance without drawing attention. Remember, the idea is not to create a new nose, but rather to improve the one that you have.

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Maximize your cosmetic results after nasal surgery and nose reshaping by following these basic post-treatment instructions. Please contact the office with any questions.

General

- Change the nasal drip pad as needed. Some bleeding and mucous is normally expected out the front of the nose or draining down the back of the throat.
- Numbness in the cheek, lips, nose, and teeth is common
- No smoking or alcohol
- No aspirin, ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil, or similar anti-inflammatory medication. You will be advised you when you may resume taking these medications.
 - Other blood thinners, such as Coumadin or Plavix, must also be discontinued, under the guidance of your primary care physician.
- No herbal medications, supplements, or teas.
 - Increased risk of bleeding include, but are not limited to Vitamin E, garlic, ginger, ginkgo, ginseng, kava, and St. John's Wort, fish oil, and green tea
 - Arnica montana herbal *tablet* may help reduce bruising and swelling

Diet

- Advance slowly from liquids to soft, then solid foods after anesthesia. No restrictions on specific type of food or drink. Drink plenty of fluids. Do not chew gum. You may use a straw.

Activity

- Sleep with your head elevated for the first week, to help reduce nasal swelling.
- Do NOT rub your nose, or put any pressure on your nose.
- Do NOT blow nose. You may, however, sniff into the nose.
- Avoid sneezing. If unable to avoid sneezing, then sneeze with your mouth open.
- Do NOT bend over or hang your head down.
- No heavy lifting, straining, strenuous activity, or sex for at least 2 weeks.
- Avoid eyeglasses for 2 weeks after surgery. Once permitted, wear eyeglasses as high as possible on the bridge. Eyeglasses may be taped onto forehead, to keep them off the nose.
- No contact sports for 6 weeks.

Hygiene

- Keep clean ice-packs, wrapped in a clean cloth, over the cheeks or forehead for the first 48 hours. Use ice every hour while awake to help reduce swelling.
- Do NOT put pressure on the nose.
- Rinse both nostrils with normal saline (salt) solution three times daily for 1 month.
- Place *Bactroban* (ie. mupirocin) ointment via a cotton-tip applicator in your nose three times daily for 1 month. Use ointment anytime your nose feels dry.
- Do NOT use any allergy nasal sprays until advised
- Do NOT get the nasal cast wet for the first week. Reinforce the nasal cast with additional tape as necessary. The cast will be removed *1 week after* surgery. Get the cast soapy wet in the shower on that last day to facilitate easier removal.