



Postoperative instructions: Rhinoplasty

TYPICAL POST-OPERATIVE SYMPTOMS

Early healing of the nose depends upon how well you take care of yourself after surgery. Please review the following instructions before surgery and ask about anything that is not clear.

General: Rhinoplasty may be performed as an outpatient or an in patient procedure. You will have absorbable sutures placed to close the incisions inside the nose. If an external approach was used, you will have non-absorbable sutures in the columella (skin between the two nostrils) that are removed approximately one week after surgery. The cast over the bridge of your nose should stay in place for at least one week to ten days. Sometimes, internal nasal splints are temporarily placed to stabilize the nasal septum. The nose may be congested or obstructed in the first few to several days following rhinoplasty. Mild oozing of blood from the nose is expected in the first 48 hours. The bridge and tip of the nose will be swollen for a few weeks. After the external approach rhinoplasty, some nasal tip swelling will persist for a full year or longer depending on the thickness of your skin. Bruising over the nasal bridge and under the eyes may occur and usually resolves after 10-14 days, often sooner.

Swelling: Everyone has some swelling after surgery. For some, the swelling is worse than others. Most of the swelling will resolve by the end of the second to third week. The skin of the nose may remain somewhat swollen for several months to a year or longer. It is important to sleep with your head elevated on several pillows at night. Cool compresses applied to the face and especially the eyes will help reduce the swelling more quickly. You should use the cool compresses for as much as possible for the first several days. A good technique is to use a wash cloth dipped in a bucket of ice water. Then squeeze out the excess water and place it over the upper cheeks and cast. Avoid placing anything frozen directly on the skin.

Bruising: Bruising is caused by small amounts of blood accumulated under the tissues during surgery. Most of it resolves completely by two to three weeks after surgery. Makeup can help hide the bruises after one week.

Sutures: If sutures have been placed in the skin, they are removed six to seven days after surgery. Clean your nostrils and any sutures at least 3-4 times daily with Bepanthen Ointment and Q tips. Do not put ointment on the steri-strips that we have applied.

Bleeding: Some bloody discharge from your nose is normal. Wear the folded gauze bandage (moustache dressing) below your nose for the first few days to catch any discharge. Call the hospital immediately if the bleeding is strong and brisk. If you cannot wait for a reply, contact your nearest Emergency Room.

Cast: If a cast has been placed, it will be removed between six to ten days after surgery. Call our office if it falls off early or gets loose.

Diet: You may have liquids by mouth once you have awakened from anesthesia. If you tolerate the liquids without significant nausea or vomiting then you may take solid foods but avoid foods that require a lot of



chewing or wide mouth opening. If nausea is persistent, an anti-nausea medication may be prescribed for you. Some patients experience a mild sore throat for 2-3 days following the procedure. This usually does not interfere with swallowing.

Pain control: Patients report mild nasal pain, congestion and headache for a few to several days following rhinoplasty. This is usually well controlled with mild pain medications like Paracetamol 500mg.

Keep “a Stiff Upper Lip”: The upper lip is a key area in nasal surgery so try not to move it too much for the first week after surgery. Avoid excessive talking, smiling, hard to chew food and brushing the teeth too vigorously. Brush your teeth gently with a toothbrush or your finger.

Activity: No bending, heavy lifting, or straining for 2 weeks following the surgery. You should plan for 1 week away from work. If your job requires manual labor, lifting or straining then you should be out of work for 2 weeks or limited to light duty until the 2 week mark. Do not blow your nose for 14 days after surgery. If you have to sneeze, do so with your mouth open.

Bathing and showering: As soon as you feel well enough, but keep the cast dry for 7 to 10 days until the morning of your appointment.

Be careful not to bump your nose: Beware of restless/playful children, bedmates and pets. Avoid putting any pressure on your nose when you sleep.

Nasal care following the surgery: Beginning on the first postoperative day, the nasal entrances should be cleansed with Bepanthen ointment (available in any pharmacy without prescription) in order to avoid incrustation. A natural salt water spray is also recommended. We will advise you how to clean the inside of your nose. Try to keep the nasal cast dry. Hair can be washed with the head tilted back in the shower or over the sink. Sleep with the head elevated for the first two weeks; this will minimize pain and congestion. You may use an extra pillow to do this. Do not wear eyeglasses after the cast comes off for 6 weeks after surgery due to the incisions in the bones of your nasal bridge.

Patience: Please understand that it takes up to one year to see the results of surgery coming into final form. It simply takes time for the swelling to resolve, and the skin envelope to shrink. This means that time is your ally and that tissues and scars will likely improve with time. Understanding this now will help temper your expectations, hone your patience and make for a more pleasurable recovery.

CALL THE HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING (TEL: 089 20 4000 145)

A high fever, severe nausea and vomiting, continued dizziness or incoherent behavior, such as hallucinations.

Any pain that cannot be controlled by your pain medication.

Bright red skin that is hot to the touch, excessive bright red bleeding from the nose

Purulent discharge (pus) coming from the nose

Severe nasal pain or headache

Severe lower extremity swelling and pain, chest pain and/or shortness of breath.