

SINONASAL SURGERY POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

1. If you had a septoplasty: You may have splints in your nose for **5-7 days** following surgery; this will make breathing through your nose difficult. Frequent hot showers, breathing in steam from a pot of boiling water, and using nasal saline sprays/irrigations will help keep the splints clean/clear until they are removed (see #6 below for more information on nasal saline spray). You may also clean the front of the nose and nostrils with a Q-tip dipped in hydrogen peroxide or warm soapy water; **do not** pull at the splints or the thin suture holding them in place.
2. Change the moustache dressing as often as needed. Some oozing of blood and mucus is expected for 2-3 days after surgery, and the dressing may need to be changed frequently during the first 24 hours following surgery. In case of profuse nasal bleeding, apply ice to the bridge of the nose and pinch the nose just above the tip and hold for 10 minutes; if bleeding continues, contact your doctor through the office or answering service.
3. **Do not** blow your nose until cleared to do so.
4. Take pain medication as prescribed. It is OK to substitute Acetaminophen (Tylenol), Advil/Motrin (Ibuprofen), or Alleve (Naproxen) if the pain medication is too strong or causes nausea. It is important to stay well hydrated after surgery. Constipation is a common side effect of pain medications. If you experience this you may take a mild over-the-counter laxative. Avoid straining with bowel movements.
5. Sleep with an extra pillow or two, elevating your head slightly. This cuts down on swelling and discomfort after surgery.
6. Obtain all medications and nasal sprays prescribed and use as directed. Antibiotics are used in the initial post-op period to prevent infection while the sinuses are healing. The saltwater nasal spray should be obtained over the counter from any major pharmacy or drugstore (examples include: Ayr, Ocean spray, Neilmed or Neti pot). These should be started the day after surgery and should be used 4-5 times a day.
7. Take all of your routine medications as prescribed, unless told otherwise by the doctor; any medications which thin the blood should be **avoided**. These include **aspirin and aspirin-like products** (Excedrin, Celebrex).
8. There are no diet restrictions, but alcohol consumption is not recommended and tobacco use is **prohibited** as Nicotine decreases blood flow to the healing nasal tissues and can actually compromise wound healing. Please make sure that you have eaten something the morning of splint removal; low blood sugar may make you feel faint when the packs are removed.
9. No heavy lifting (nothing more than 10 lbs), no bending or stooping to lift, and no vigorous exercise until cleared by the physician.
10. No airplane travel for 2 weeks following sinus surgery; the cabin pressure changes can cause pain and swelling within the sinuses. You may fly sooner after nasal septal surgery alone.

11. You can expect to have a stuffy nose for about 3-5 days after surgery, with some intermittent congestion for up to 2 weeks depending on a personal history of allergies or other factors. Sense of smell will be diminished during this time, and sense of taste will also be affected. There may be some tenderness or numbness in your upper teeth. You may express old clot and discolored mucus from your nose for up to **3-4 weeks** after surgery, depending on how frequently and how effectively you irrigate your nose with the saltwater spray.

12. Signs of a post-operative infection, which may occur within the 6 weeks after surgery, include fever, foul odor in the nose, discolored nasal secretions, facial pain and pressure. If any of these signs develop, contact Dr. Leach to discuss treatment.

13. Patients are seen back in the office approximately 5-7 days after surgery. Sinus debridement/cleaning is performed at this post-op visit and small tampons or spacers may be removed from the sinus cavities. Debridement may be repeated again 2-3 weeks later. This is done to remove blood, mucus and crusts that build up in the sinuses which could lead to infection or further obstruction.

Further Instructions: _____

Instructions received with understanding: _____
(Signature of responsible adult)

Signature RN _____ Date/ Time _____