

Arizona Sinus Center

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Post-operative Instructions Following Rhinoplasty

General:

Rhinoplasty is performed as an outpatient procedure. If you have other medical conditions such as sleep apnea, you may spend one night in the hospital after your 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 at the first post-operative visit. The cast over the bridge of your nose should stay in place for one week. Often, internal nasal splints are temporarily placed to help with healing and minimize scar tissue formation. On occasion, nasal sponge packing is placed to minimize post-operative bleeding. The nose may be congested or obstructed in the first few to several days following rhinoplasty. This is relieved with saline spray (see Nasal Care following the Surgery below). Mild oozing of blood from the nose is expected in the first 48 hours. The bridge and tip of the nose may be swollen for a few weeks. After the external approach rhinoplasty, mild nasal tip swelling can persist for several weeks. Bruising over the nasal bridge and under the eyes may occur and usually resolves after two weeks.

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 without restrictions. If nausea is persistent, an anti-emetic 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 moderate nasal pain, congestion and headache for a few to several days following rhinoplasty. This is usually well controlled with prescription strength oral pain medications (Vicodin, Tylenol #3, Ultracet). Please take the pain medication prescribed by your surgeon when needed. You should avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) such as aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen (Excedrin, Motrin, Naprosyn, Advil) because these drugs are mild blood thinners and will increase your chances of having a post-operative nose bleed. Please contact our office (602) 258-9859 if your pain is not controlled with your prescription pain medication.

Activity:

No 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. Walking and other light activities are encouraged after the first 24 hours.

Nasal care following the surgery:

Spray the nostrils with saline solution (over-the-counter bottles are available in most pharmacies: Ocean Spray, Deep Sea, etc.) beginning the evening of the surgery (3 sprays each nostril every few hours while you are awake). Gently apply a layer of antibiotic ointment to the nostrils and any suture lines on the outside of the nose twice daily for the first week. Hot steam showers as needed are very helpful in relieving nasal congestion and crusting. 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 48 hours; this will minimize pain and congestion. You may use two pillows to do this or sleep in a reclining chair. Your doctor may have you spray your nose with decongestant spray (oxymetazoline or neosynepherine) as needed for persistent nasal congestion and oozing.

Follow-up appointment:

Your follow up appointment in the office will be 5-8 days following your surgery. This visit should be scheduled prior to your surgery (at the time of your pre-operative visit). If you do not have the appointment made, please have someone contact our office when you arrive home from the surgery center.

Please call our office immediately if you experience:

- *Brisk nose bleeding
- *Fever greater than 101 degrees Fahrenheit
- *Purulent discharge (pus) coming from the nose
- *Severe nasal pain or headache

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