

RHINOPLASTY POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

The following is a list of general instructions for your care following surgery. Please read them carefully several times as most of your questions should be answered here. Instructions for your care will also be reviewed the morning after surgery. Carefully following these instructions should help you get the best results from your surgery.

After Surgery

Following your surgery you must have another adult stay with you the first night. You should plan on remaining within thirty miles from the location of your surgery for this first night. It is also important for you to keep your head elevated the evening after surgery as well as for the first two weeks following surgery. This can be done by either sleeping in a recliner tilted at 45 degrees or sleeping with two pillows underneath your head. Avoid rolling onto your face. Sleeping on your back for the first two weeks after surgery helps to ensure this.

Cool compresses should be applied across the eyes for the first 48 hours after surgery. This involves multiple washcloths and a basin of ice water. These washcloths should be changed out of the basins every twenty to thirty minutes to keep them cool. The washcloths should be applied diagonally over each eye and crisscrossed over the forehead. The nurse will demonstrate how to do this before you leave recovery.

Daily Care

This care will be reviewed the morning following your surgery:

1. Go over suture lines inside the nose three times daily with hydrogen peroxide on a Q-tip. After this again with a Q-tip apply a liberal amount of Bacitracin or Neosporin ointment. The stitches inside the nose are dissolvable and keeping them lubricated helps quicken the process.
2. You may shower the second day following surgery, but it is important to keep the tape and splint on your nose dry at all times. Baths are a better choice for most people.
3. Be sure to report immediately any signs of bleeding that persist for more than ten minutes, infection, redness, fever, unusual drainage, or pain.
4. Stitches, if present, will be removed within a week after surgery.
5. Following removal of the tape and splint, you will need to gently wash your nose twice a day to help reduce oiliness.

What to expect

Swelling

Swelling will vary patient-to-patient. Swelling may actually increase the first three to four days before subsiding. When your splint is removed at the one-week point, your nose may appear fat and turned up too much; this is to be expected. Most of your swelling should resolve over the first two to three weeks. Do expect, however, to have minor fluctuations in the remaining swelling over the course of the next two to three months. Things to do to minimize this swelling include keeping your head elevated as much as possible over the first two to three weeks, avoiding bending over or heavy lifting for the first three weeks, and avoiding prolonged sun exposure for the first two to three months.

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Discoloration

Bruising will vary like swelling from patient-to-patient. Most bruising and discoloration should resolve over the first two weeks. Makeup, with Dr. Hamilton's permission, can be applied ten days to two weeks after surgery.

Numbness

Your nose will be numb following surgery. This is normal and will subside over the coming weeks to months. Unusual sensations, pins and needles, and occasionally mild discomfort may occur as these nerves regenerate over time.

Bleeding

If bleeding does occur, lie down with your head elevated. Try to relax. You may take a pain pill or a Valium. Place cool compresses over your eyes just as you did after surgery. You may apply light pressure on the side of each of your nose. Wait 15 minutes. If bleeding persists at this point, please contact our office.

Depression

It is not uncommon for patients to go through a period of mild depression after cosmetic surgery. This typically occurs the second week after surgery while some of the swelling and bruising still persist and yet the patient is anxious to see a final result. Realize this is a temporary condition and things will improve. Focus on diligently following the wound care as well as other activities to help divert your mind.

Eye Glasses

Eyeglasses may be worn with the splint in place. Once the splint is removed, they should be either suspended from the forehead or supported on the cheek for a period of six weeks. This is critical - pressure on the nose may change its final shape. Contact lenses may be inserted the week after surgery.

Possible Complications

Bleeding, infection, scarring, asymmetry, unimproved or worse airway obstruction, septal perforation, persistent deformity, possible need for revision surgery.

Restrictions

1. No strenuous exercise for at least two weeks
2. No heavy lifting for three weeks
3. No "pull-over" clothing for two weeks
4. Avoid hard chewing foods for two weeks
5. Avoid yawning or wide mouth opening for two weeks
6. Avoid nose blowing or sniffing through the nose for two weeks
7. Use a baby toothbrush on the upper teeth for two weeks following surgery
8. If sneezing, sneeze with the mouth open for two weeks
9. No driving for one, preferably two weeks after surgery
10. No contact sports for six weeks
11. No swimming under water for 3 weeks

Finally

The healing time for nasal surgery is often less than expected and the results are worth the wait. While swelling should be completely gone after four to six weeks, your healing will continue for the entire first year. I will follow you through this entire process, but be patient.

Please do not ever hesitate to contact our office.

Mark M. Hamilton, M.D., F.A.C.S.

Hamilton

FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

Signature

Printed Name

Date

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