

## RHINOPLASTY: POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

The following is a list of general instructions for your care following rhinoplasty. Please read them carefully several times, as most of your questions should be answered here. These instructions will also be reviewed the morning after surgery.

### After Surgery

- Have an adult stay with you the first night and remain within 30 miles of the surgery location.
- Keep your head elevated the evening of surgery and for the first two weeks. Sleep in a recliner tilted at 45 degrees or with two pillows under your head.
- Avoid rolling onto your face — sleep on your back for the first two weeks.
- Apply cool compresses across the eyes for the first 48 hours, using washcloths in a basin of ice water (change every 20–30 minutes). The nurse will demonstrate before you leave recovery.

### Daily Care

1. Clean suture lines inside the nose three times daily with hydrogen peroxide on a Q-tip, then apply a liberal amount of Bacitracin or Neosporin ointment. Inside stitches are dissolvable.
2. You may shower the second day after surgery, but keep the tape and splint on your nose dry at all times. Baths are preferable for most patients.
3. Report immediately any signs of bleeding persisting more than 10 minutes, infection, redness, fever, unusual drainage, or pain.
4. Stitches, if present, will be removed within one week after surgery.
5. Following removal of the tape and splint, gently wash your nose twice a day to help reduce oiliness.
6. You may apply acne medications/salicylic acid pads (such as Stridex or Clearasil) to the nose after splint removal to reduce oiliness.

### What to Expect

**Swelling:** Swelling will vary patient to patient and may actually increase in the first three to four days before subsiding. When your splint is removed at one week, your nose may appear swollen or turned up — this is expected. Most swelling resolves over two to three weeks, with minor fluctuations over the next two to three months. Keep your head elevated, avoid bending over or heavy lifting for three weeks, and avoid prolonged sun exposure for two to three months.

**Discoloration:** Most bruising should resolve over the first two weeks. Makeup may be applied ten days to two weeks after surgery with Dr. Hamilton's permission.

**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 mild discomfort may occur as nerves regenerate.

**Bleeding:** If bleeding occurs, lie down with your head elevated, relax, and apply light pressure to the sides of your nose. Wait 15 minutes. If bleeding persists, contact our office.

**Depression:** It is not uncommon to experience mild depression during the second week after surgery while bruising and swelling persist. This is temporary — focus on wound care and diverting activities. Things will improve.

Eyeglasses: May be worn with the splint in place. Once the splint is removed, glasses must be either suspended from the forehead or supported on the cheek for six weeks. Pressure on the nose can change its final shape. Contact lenses may be reinserted the week after surgery.

## Possible Complications

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

## Restrictions After Rhinoplasty

7. No strenuous exercise for at least two weeks
8. No heavy lifting for three weeks
9. No "pull-over" clothing for two weeks
10. Avoid hard-chewing foods for two weeks
11. Avoid yawning or wide mouth opening for two weeks
12. Avoid nose blowing or sniffing for two weeks
13. Use a baby toothbrush on the upper teeth for two weeks following surgery
14. If sneezing, sneeze with mouth open for two weeks
15. No driving for one week, preferably two weeks after surgery
16. No glasses on the nose for three to four weeks depending on the type (we have glasses holders if needed- please ask)
17. No contact sports for six weeks
18. No swimming underwater for three weeks

## A Note on Healing

The healing time for nasal surgery is often less than expected and the results are worth the wait. While swelling should be completely resolved after four to six weeks, healing continues for the entire first year. Dr. Hamilton will follow you through this entire process. Please do not hesitate to contact our office at any time.

*By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed these post-operative instructions, that my questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and that I understand my post-operative care responsibilities.*

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_