

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Rhinoplasty

Our goal is to ensure your safety, help you have the best possible outcome and help you feel comfortable during your recovery. Please follow these instructions on how to take care of yourself following your procedure.

GOING HOME:

- After your surgery, your surgeon will check on you before you are discharged and the nursing staff will ensure you are ready to go home. Please arrange to have someone drive you home the day of your surgery. To ensure your safety, you are required to have a responsible adult stay with you for the first 24 hours after your surgery.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER SURGERY:

- After surgery, it is important for you to rest. While resting, please keep your head in an elevated position for your comfort and to decrease swelling. You may be most comfortable in a recliner or bed with several pillows to support you in this position.
- It is equally important that you move your body to ensure you do not get blood clots. In the days that follow, go for frequent short walks around the house to keep your body moving. Your aim should be to be up walking every waking hour of the day.
- To minimize bruising and swelling, you should use cold compresses over your nose and eyes. Crushed ice in a sealed bag covered in a thin towel works well as it will fit closely to your face. Please ensure you do not get your dressings wet.
- You may experience nausea from the anesthesia following your surgery. You may wish to start with clear fluids and slowly proceed to a soft diet when you are able to do so.
- It is also very important that you stay hydrated, so please ensure you drink plenty of liquids (non-alcoholic).

INCISIONS:

- You will have a small bandage under your nose, on your upper lip. You may change this small bandage as often as required as blood-tinged discharge is likely to occur. This is normal and this type of packing and incision allow the blood to escape the nasal tissue. This discharge should stop the day following surgery. You may remove the bandage under your nose after the discharge has stopped.
- You will have a small splint over the upper part of your nose. This splint protects your newly shaped nose and helps to hold it in place. Please keep your splint in place until your postoperative visit, usually 5-7 days after your surgery. Your surgeon will remove the splint at this time.
- You may have nasal packing that was placed in your nostrils, this will be removed by your surgeon at your first postoperative visit.
- You may have a shower or bath, but please ensure you do not get your head/face wet. It is very important that the nose splint stay completely dry until your first postoperative visit. Once your surgeon has removed your gauze and sutures, you may shower and gently wash your face.
- It is a good idea to protect scars from the sun (with clothing or good sunscreen) for at least 12 months to prevent burning and permanent darkening of the area.

SWELLING AND BRUISING:

- Expect swelling and bruising to start immediately after your surgery. It should peak over 3 to 4 days and will lessen by 2 weeks. Please use the ice/cold packs as described above to minimize swelling.
- Discoloration around the eyes differs between patients, but it usually resolves within one week of surgery.
- To minimize swelling for the first 2-3 weeks, please keep your head elevated on extra pillows when lying down and avoid any strenuous activities that raise your blood pressure (exercising and bending over).
- You may experience nasal stuffiness during your first week as your nose will be swollen. The blocked feeling should improve over time. Please DO NOT BLOW YOUR NOSE for two weeks following surgery. This will disrupt proper healing and may cause bleeding. If you sneeze, it is helpful to sneeze with your mouth open to decrease pressure on your nose.
- If you have crusting form, it can be gently removed with a cotton swap and hydrogen peroxide. It is very important that avoid any movement of the healing area, as mentioned, please do not blow your nose.
- You may experience bleeding/nasal discharge over the first few days. A small amount is normal and it can be dabbed away with a facial tissue.
- You may also experience numbness at the tip of your nose, front teeth or the roof of your mouth following your surgery. This is normal as the nerves have been disturbed during surgery and will resolve over several weeks/months following your surgery.

PAIN & MEDICATION:

- It is normal to have pain and discomfort following your procedure. Please take following medication as directed:

Tylenol
 Ibuprofen
 Other: _____

Prescription Medication: Celebrex (Celecoxib)
 Prescription Medication: Morphine
 Prescription Medication: Antibiotic

- Please take Tylenol and Celebrex (Celecoxib) as directed after your surgery. Do not wait until you are uncomfortable before taking your next dose. Maintain baseline comfort with these medications for the first few days after your surgery. If you require additional relief after taking Tylenol and Celebrex, you may take morphine or another prescribed pain medication as directed.
- If you have been provided with a prescription for antibiotics, please ensure you take the medication as directed.
- If you have worsening pain not controlled by your medication, please contact our office for instructions.

ACTIVITIES:

- As mentioned above, get plenty of rest. Please rest in an upright position for your comfort and to decrease the swelling for the first 5-10 days. You may be most comfortable in a recliner or bed with several pillows to support you in this position.
- Please avoid strenuous activity for 2-4 weeks after surgery. However, low impact activities such as walking are strongly encouraged. Your surgeon may advise you on other specific restrictions based on your case.
- We recommend that you do not wear any clothing that you need to pull over your head for the first two weeks following surgery.
- It is very important that you avoid activities where your nose could be bumped, even a slight bump could cause movement to your newly constructed nose. As such, please no contact sports for six weeks. Please contact our office if you have had any significant injury/contact to your nose.
- Please do not wear your glasses for about a month following your surgery. Please wear contacts or if you must wear your glasses, taping the bridge of your glasses to your forehead is recommended in order to not put any pressure on your new nose.
- Please refrain from smoking. Smoking may increase the chance of complications.

- Please do not swim in lakes, pools or use hot tubs for at least 2 weeks following surgery.
- It generally takes up to 6-8 weeks to feel normal again and resume regular activities. Please ask your surgeon if you have any questions about activity level during the healing process.

WORK:

- You will likely be ready to return to work within 1-4 weeks depending on your occupation and type of physical exertion required. If you require a medical note for your employer, please contact your Patient Care Coordinator and they will be happy to help you.

DRIVING:

- You must be pain free and off all pain medication before driving. You may wish to take a licensed adult with you during your first short trip.

THE RESULT:

- You can expect swelling and bruising for the first 2 weeks after surgery. In many cases it can take several weeks before the new shape of your nose becomes apparent. Your nose will continue to heal and the final contour can be seen 12-18 months after surgery. Your scars will remain slightly pink for more than 6 months, but will gradually fade.

If you have any of the following, call our office (during business hours), your family doctor or present to the Emergency Department:

Signs of Infection:

- Pus-like drainage from the incision, grey or green.
- Redness that spreads beyond the incision.
- New pain, getting worse after 3 or 4 days.
- Fever, chills, sweats, aches and pains (flu-like symptoms).

Other Symptoms:

- Increased swelling or bruising after 3 days.
- Severe or increased pain not relieved by Medication.

Questions not addressed by this handout

Special Instructions: _____

POSTOPERATIVE CALL:

- The nurse assigned to your care may call you the day after your surgery to check in. Please let her know of any questions or concerns.

FOR AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCIES:

- Call the Queensway Carleton Hospital at 613-721-2000 and the Plastic Surgeon on-call will be paged.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT:

- Your Patient Care Coordinator will call you to confirm your appointment. Please call us at 613-232-7777 if you have any questions or concerns.

YOUR APPOINTMENT HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR: _____