

Lake County ENT/Head & Neck Specialists

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Post-operative Instructions Following Septoplasty

General: Septoplasty 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 incision in the septum. Often, plastic splints are 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 septoplasty. This is relieved with saline rinses (see Nasal Care following the Surgery below). Mild oozing of blood from the nose is expected in the first 48 hours. You should avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) such as aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen (Excedrin, Motrin, Naprosyn, Advil) for 10 days prior to the surgery. These drugs are mild blood thinners and will increase your chances of having a nosebleed.

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, a 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 septoplasty. This is usually well controlled with prescription strength oral pain medications (Vicodin). 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 nose bleed.

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: Rinse the nose 3 times daily with saline solution beginning the afternoon following surgery. This can be accomplished with a Neil-Med Sinus Rinse bottle (available over the counter at most pharmacies) or a Netty-Pot. Gently apply a layer of antibiotic ointment to the nostrils twice daily for the first week. Hot steam showers as needed are very helpful in relieving nasal congestion and crusting. 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.

Follow-up appointment: Your follow up appointment in the office will be 2-5 days following your surgery. The splints will likely be removed at that time.