



PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING NASAL SURGERY

Removing Nasal Packing

If you are discharged home with nasal packing, you should remove it the next morning by pulling on the black string which is attached to the packing. **DO NOT CUT THE STRING** as there are no sutures.

Cleaning Your Nose

You can expect some bloody mucus drainage from your nose for up to one week after surgery. This drainage will be greatest the first 3 days after surgery, during which time you may wish to keep a gauze bandage taped beneath your nose. It is best not to blow your nose immediately after surgery, as this may cause bleeding. After 3 days, you may blow your nose gently.

The best way to clear your nose of mucus and dried blood is with saline (salt water) irrigations. These irrigations are done with a NeilMed Sinus Rinse bottle, which will be given to you by the nurse at time-of discharge from the hospital. Place the contents of one salt packet into the plastic bottle and fill it with lukewarm tap water. If you run out of packets, an additional supply can be purchased at the local pharmacy, or you can use a teaspoon of table salt instead. Once the bottle has been filled, you lean over a sink and squeeze the bottle to irrigate each nostril with the saline solution. Use half of the saline in the bottle for each nostril. If done correctly, mucus will be flushed out of the front of the nose. Some mucus may even be rinsed to the back of the nose and flow out of the other nostril or the mouth. These irrigations should be started the first day after surgery and repeated at least twice a day for one week. At first, they may feel unusual, but soon you will find them to be comfortable and soothing. You may even wish to irrigate more often than twice a day, which is fine. Don't worry about flushing too hard. The irrigations can be vigorous, so long as they don't cause new bleeding.

Medications

You will be given a prescription for an antibiotic and a pain medication to take at home. Directions will be on the bottles. Pain following nasal surgery is usually mild and readily controlled by medication. Do not be afraid to take a pain pill if you are uncomfortable, especially when going to bed at night or awakening in the morning. Sleeping with your head elevated (on at least 2 pillows) helps decrease pain and swelling.

Daily Activity

You can eat and drink whatever you like. You may shower and wash your hair, but do so carefully the first time after surgery. Heavy lifting, straining, and exercise that might cause nasal bleeding should be avoided during the first week. Thereafter, you may resume normal activity if you feel up to it. Don't be surprised if you tire more easily than usual. That's your body's way of letting you know you need to take it easy during the healing period.

What to Look For

Please call the office or come to the Emergency Department should you develop:

- Brisk, new bleeding from the nose which doesn't stop after a few minutes of sitting up and squeezing your nostrils together.
- A fever of greater than 101 degrees orally

Breathing Through Your Nose

Don't be discouraged if you can't breathe through your nose at first. It typically takes 2 to 3 weeks before the inflammation and swelling inside the nose have subsided enough to provide a good nasal airway. Remember, your body is undergoing a gradual healing process. Soon you will be feeling better than ever!