



**SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO
SURGERY CENTER**

Nasal & Sinus Surgery Postoperative Instructions

What to expect after surgery

If only a septoplasty and partial tubinectomy are performed the procedure takes about 45-60 minutes, and may take up to 3 hours if sinus surgery is to be done. In most cases, **no packing of the nose** is required if there is minimal bleeding, and there is **not much discomfort after the operation**.

Initially the nose will be blocked due to **postoperative swelling**. The nose will open up over the next 2 weeks, and the **maximum ease of breathing will be attained around 4-6 weeks**. There will be some **crusts persistent in the nose for up to 4-5 weeks**.

There are **dissolvable stitches** in the nose and at some point after surgery you may see these come out. These stitches will look like fragments of **thin brown string**. Do not be alarmed if you see these, it is natural for them to come out after a few days to a few weeks.

Bleeding

During the **first 24-48 hours** there will be some oozing of blood from the front of the nose and some blood going down the back of the throat. You will be given several small sponges to place under the nose to catch the blood so that it does not run down your face. This dressing, known as the "drip pad" may be changed as often as you like. You may also feel better if you spit out any blood that runs down the back of the throat, as if a large amount of this is swallowed it can cause nausea. Ordinarily the dressing needs to be changed when it is saturated every 20 minutes to 1 hour during the first day or two. You should keep track of how much bleeding occurs from the nose and down the back of the throat. The amount of bleeding may vary from person to person but keep in mind that if the total amount of blood loss within the first day is less than one measuring cup, it is not enough to cause a problem. Once again, a small amount of blood in the stomach is to be expected and should not alarm you. If the amount of bleeding appears to be more than this you should contact Dr. Frost for additional instructions.

During the first night after surgery it is a good idea to **sleep with the head elevated** to lower the risk of bleeding from the nose. Likewise, **try not to bend over for the first two days** after surgery to avoid bleeding.

During the **first week** after surgery you may **sniff** any drainage through the nose, but **do not blow the nose** as this may cause bleeding, and if the sinuses have been operated on, it can cause air to be forced into the soft tissues of the face or around the eye. If you have to sneeze, **sneeze with the mouth open**.

- If you have specific questions regarding your discharge instructions, contact Southern New Mexico Surgery Center between the hours of 0800 am - 0500 pm, Monday through Thursday @ (575) 437-0890 and ask to speak to nurse.
- If you have questions or problems with your prescriptions or surgical procedure, please call the physician office at (575) 437-4533.
- After hour care is handled by the physician office @ (575) 437-4533. One of our doctors is on call 24 hours a day. If you have an emergency or need immediate medical treatment, go to the emergency room or call 911.

I have read/been read the instructions and understand them. A copy has been given to me.

Patient / Guardian Signature

Nurse Signature

Patient Label