



# Rhinoplasty

## Post Operative Instructions

### What to do:

- Keep your head elevated after surgery. This decreases swelling and discomfort.
- For 1-2 days after surgery, a gauze dressing may be applied to the bottom of the nose, and secured with tape, to collect any drainage from the nose.
- Nasal packing is commonly used. These are generally removed within 3 days of surgery; antibiotics are usually prescribed during this time.
- A splint may be applied to the nose. This protects the nose while it is healing, usually for about 1 week after surgery. Keep the splint intact and the area clean and dry.
- You may wash your face and skin around the nose lightly with soap and water. Avoid wetting your nose/face in the shower until the splint and packing have been removed and until so directed by your provider.
- Ice can be applied for 2-3 days following surgery. Avoid direct contact of the ice with skin, as this can result in cold-related skin damage.
- Avoid aspirin-containing products or anti-inflammatory medications (Motrin, Aleve, etc.) after surgery, as these may increase the risk of bleeding immediately after surgery. Tylenol is safe immediately after surgery and may be alternated with (or used in place of) prescribed pain medication.
- It is not generally necessary, in the immediate postoperative period, to apply any ointments or topical compounds.
- Nasal trauma (even minor) can compromise the surgical result. This should be vigilantly avoided.
- Avoid forcible nose-blowing or sneezing through the nose for approximately 2 weeks after surgery.
- Avoid strenuous activity, exercise, or heavy lifting following surgery. Discuss timing of return to these activities with your provider.
- Driving should be avoided if you are taking narcotic pain medications or if there is still significant pain from the surgery. Driving while either of these conditions is present could result in an unsafe driving situation.

### What to look for / Troubleshooting:

- Signs of bleeding: a small or moderate amount of bloody drainage following surgery is not uncommon and is usually not indicative of active bleeding. If there appears to be active bleeding, keep your head elevated and apply gentle, direct pressure with gauze, cloth, or a tissue-paper to the bottom of the nose for a few minutes. If this controls the bleeding, you should still contact your provider to discuss this. If bleeding is heavy or not controlled with these measures, emergency medical care should be sought immediately.
- Signs of infection: increasing redness, pain, warmth, swelling, or purulent drainage at the surgical site. Additionally, fevers and chills can be signs of infection. Antibiotics are generally prescribed for about 1 week after surgery, and nasal packing should be removed within 3 days of surgery to reduce risk of infection. Normal surgical pain and swelling should generally begin to resolve 2-3 days after surgery. If you suspect infection at the surgical site, contact your provider as soon as possible to determine the appropriate treatment course.
- Bruising and swelling after rhinoplasty is common and frequently involves the tissues around the eyes, resulting in a "black-eyed" appearance. This should gradually resolve over the next 7-10 days.
- If the nasal packing is inadvertently dislodged, this is usually not problematic. Do not try to re-insert the packing – contact your provider for further direction.
- If the nasal splint becomes inadvertently dislodged, contact your provider for recommendations regarding whether or not it should be replaced.
- As noted above, postoperative nasal trauma has the potential to disrupt the surgical result, depending on the severity. If this occurs, you should contact your provider for further direction.
- If there are external sutures, these should generally be removed 5-7 days after surgery.
- For other problems or issues, contact your provider..

If any problems arise or if you have any questions, please call (408) 851-2000.