

Southwest Ear, Nose & Throat

Head & Neck Surgery
100
Allergy & Sinus
Hearing & Otology

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Post-Op Instructions: Sinus Surgery

Introduction

Although you have had the most advanced and least invasive sinus procedure available today, it is not uncommon to experience some postoperative discomfort. I have addressed the most common questions below.

General

- It is common to feel tired after general anesthesia and sinus surgery for up to 10 days postoperatively. DO NOT overdo it, increase your activity level gradually.
- Bleeding is expected after surgery and can last up to 10 days. Brisk bleeding that does not stop should be reported to your doctor.
- If you are experiencing a nosebleed, place Afrin (oxymetazoline) spray in your nose, and place your head down and pinch your nostrils for 20 minutes.
- Irrigations will result in significant clots and debris being washed out of your sinus cavities.
- Clear drainage several hours after irrigations is common and will typically come out at the worst possible moments.
- Low grade temperatures are common after general anesthesia, however, if your temperature is greater than 102 °F, report this to your doctor.
- Patients routinely experience headaches as well as pain and pressure between or above the eyes.
- For patients who have also had a septoplasty, stents used in the nose make it difficult to breath until they are removed at the first postoperative visit.
- If you feel it is difficult to get air through your nose after surgery, Afrin (oxymetazoline) or Neosynephrine nasal spray can be used at night for up to 3 consecutive days. These medications are addictive and must be discontinued after 3 days.

Medications

- Your doctor may prescribe strong pain medicines (narcotics) for pain control after surgery. The majority of patients require pain relief for up to 7 days after surgery. To wean off the narcotics, substitute Tylenol for pain relief. Avoid aspirin, ibuprofen, Aleve, or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory pain relievers for 2 weeks after surgery.
- Antibiotics are not routinely prescribed after surgery.
- Pulmicort irrigations for your nose may prescribed. Take as directed.

Activity and Restrictions

- Increase your activity gradually over the next two weeks.
- Running errands or light work is allowed.
- Gentle nose blowing is allowed and sneeze with your mouth open.
- You do not need to wear a mask during the recovery period.
- No heavy lifting greater than 10 lbs. for the next 2 weeks.
- No aerobic exercise until after the completion of the first postoperative visit.
- No swimming or chlorine pool exposure until 2 weeks after surgery.
- No driving or operating machinery while on the narcotic medicines.
- No flying for 2 weeks.

Postoperative Visits

- In order to obtain a satisfactory result, postoperative visits are essential. If scar tissue begins to form, this can be dealt with at your routine postoperative visits.
- Your first postoperative visit will be 1-2 weeks after surgery. At that office visit small, soft sponge spacers will be removed from the nose along with old clots and debris.
- The second postoperative visit is 2 to 4 weeks after the surgery and requires additional cleaning.
- Depending on the type of sinus disease, some patients require visits 3 to 4 times per year.

Recovery Period and Healing

- We routinely recommend 10 to 14 days off work. Some patients feel well enough to return to work within 7 to 10 days.
- Most patients are healed within 6 weeks.