

Vail Valley Ear, Nose & Throat Group, P.C.
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POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS
NASAL SURGERY

Recovery: Recovery from nasal surgery usually takes 5 to 7 days. Most patients are bothered most by a stuffy, runny nose. Pain is usually moderate. Plan on taking it easy at home for at least 5 days after surgery. Many patients can return to work on a limited basis 3 to 5 days after surgery. However, you will be quite stuffy with a very nasal voice for about a week, so keep this in mind when planning your work schedule.

After surgery, keep your head elevated and keep an ice pack on the nose as much as possible for a full 24 hours. Bags of frozen peas make ideal ice packs as they are light and conform nicely to the nose and face.

There will be varying amounts of bloody mucous coming from the nose for 1 or 2 days after surgery. You will need to change a gauze drip pad as needed. Initially, this will be about every couple of hours, but this will decrease quickly over the first 24 hours. When the drainage stops, you no longer need to wear the drip pad. You may clean crusts from the nostril using Q-tips and either warm water or hydrogen peroxide.

DO NOT BLOW YOUR NOSE FOR A FULL 2 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY. THIS CAN DAMAGE YOUR EYES OR CAUSE BLEEDING. You may sniff gently or breath out gently to help get mucous out of the nose, but do not blow or sniff with any force. If you sneeze, do so through your mouth to avoid pressure in the nose.

You may have either splints (if a septoplasty was performed) or light packing (if sinus surgery was performed), and these will generally be removed by the doctor in about 7 days.

Medications: You will be given prescriptions for pain medications and an antibiotic.

Use a Saline Nasal Spray (such as Ocean spray) at least 4 times a day for 2 weeks. This is to keep the nose moist and prevent scabs and crusts from forming. Use 4 to 6 sprays in each side of the nose and gently sniff.

Also use Afrin Spray (oxymetazoline spray) 3 times a day for 3 days only. Use 2 to 3 sprays in each side of the nose.

Activity: No strenuous activity for about 2 weeks. As a general rule, no bending at the waist and no lifting heavier than a phone book.

Diet: You may eat a regular diet.

Follow up: Your first post-op appointment should be about 7 days after surgery. Please call and make this appointment, if one has not already been made.

Unusual occurrences: Heavy or prolonged bleeding from the nose is not normal. If this occurs, first soak the nose with 8 to 10 sprays of Afrin. If the bleeding continues, call the office immediately. Severe headaches or visual changes such as double vision or blurry vision are not normal, and if you notice these you should call the office immediately. Please feel free to call the office during normal business hours with any questions or concerns, and please reserve after hours calls for emergencies only.