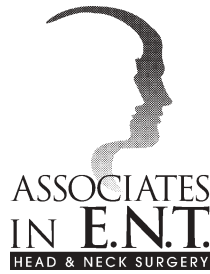


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## HOME CARE AFTER SEPTOPLASTY

### Explanation of Procedure:

The nasal septum runs down the middle of the nose and divides it into equal halves. Due to injury or problems of development, the septum can become moved to one side of the nose (deviated), which interferes with the free flow of air through the nose. Septoplasty (sep' toe plas' ty) is the surgery to repair the nasal septum by removing bits of bone and cartilage.

### Care of the Nose

Do not blow the nose until told it is OK to begin to gently do so. The patient may gently dab the nose with a tissue by lightly wiping straight down (not up). Be careful not to move the nose from side to side or put anything into the nose (such as tissue or cotton swab).

### Drainage and Dressing Care

After surgery, both sides of the nose may be tightly packed and/or a splint placed to discourage bleeding and movement. A nasal sling (gauze taped under the nose) will also be in place and will need to be frequently changed. Bleeding may be increased by the ride home and with exertion, but should decrease if the patient rests and holds ice in the mouth. Gauze may need to be changed several times during this period, and it may be removed when drainage ceases.

If you have packing, it will be removed 24 to 36 hours after surgery, and splints are generally removed within 3 to 7 days. There will be dark reddish brown, blood-tinged or thick yellow-green drainage from the nose that may last for several weeks. You do not need to worry as this is normal and is not a sign of infection. ***A continuous stream of bright red blood should be reported to the office immediately (423/267-6738).*** After your packing is removed, use a nasal saline spray (such as Ocean or Ayr) to prevent crusting in the nose.

### Congestion

Due to swelling inside the nose, the patient should expect a feeling of nasal congestion, similar to having a bad cold, and possibly headache for up to 2 weeks following surgery. Try sleeping on 2 or 3 pillows to help relieve pressure. The stuffy feeling will gradually decrease. A humidifier may also help. Because of mouth breathing, expect the mouth to be dry and crusty. Frequently rinsing the mouth with water and cleaning the teeth will help. If one or both sides of the nose persists in feeling totally blocked, call the office (423/267-6738).

### Diet

Drink lots of cool liquids (such as Kool-Aid, soft drinks, popsicles, water, Gatorade, apple juice or Jello). Do not drink hot beverages or eat hot food as these may cause the mouth and nose to heat up and lead to a nosebleed. Progress to light foods such as warm soup or pasta and resume the normal diet when the patient feels able.

## **Pain**

There may be a mild to moderate headache and discomfort in the nose after surgery. The outside of the nose will be very tender to touch. *Do not use aspirin or ibuprofen products as these may cause nosebleed.* Give acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol) every four hours or prescription medicine as directed for pain.

## **Activity**

*Do not blow your nose but you may sniff back secretions.* After 10 to 14 days you may gently blow your nose unless you are told not to. Do not put anything into your nose, including tissues, handkerchiefs or cotton swabs.

The patient should rest at least 24 hours. Sleep with at least a 45° angle (2 to 3 pillows or in a recliner), not lying flat, and avoid lying on your stomach or side. Avoid hot showers or baths. No heavy lifting (over 5 pounds) or exercise which may cause overheating should be done for at least 1 week. Avoid staying bent over for prolonged periods. Avoid long trips and plan to stay in the general area for at least 2 weeks after surgery. Avoid smoke, dust, fumes or anything which may irritate the nose. Avoid straining for a bowel movement. If you are constipated, take a stool softener or gentle laxative. Avoid sexual activity for the first 72 hours.

## **CALL THE OFFICE (423/267-6738)**

Be sure to have your pharmacy name and telephone number available when you call.

- If a large amount of bright red blood runs from the nose or down the throat.
- If a fever above 101° persists even if you drink plenty of fluids and take Tylenol.
- If there is any increase in pain, redness or swelling of the nose.
- If the discharge from the nose has a foul odor (yellow or green is normal).
- If there is persistent nausea.

## **Specific Instructions:**

If you have packing, your doctor will instruct you to return for removal in 24 to 36 hours. If you have splints, your doctor will have you return within a 3-7 day time period for removal. Please call the office to confirm the appointment time and location.

Return to the office  
for a second appointment on: \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. / p.m.