After Your Septoplasty

Self-care and what to expect

This handout explains what to expect after having septoplasty surgery.

Activity

Do normal easy activities after your surgery, such as walking or moving about your house or office.

For 1 Week After Surgery

- Put a few pillows under your head when you lie down, or sleep in a recliner chair if that is more comfortable.
- Avoid doing any activity that makes you breathe hard, sweat, or strain.
- Do not lift, push, or pull anything that weighs more than 10 pounds. (A gallon of water weighs almost 9 pounds.)

For 2 Weeks After Surgery

- Avoid blowing your nose.
- If you sneeze, keep your mouth open to reduce pressure on your nose.

Eating

You may eat your normal foods.

Nasal Care

- Your nasal splints will stay in place for 7 to 14 days. Your surgeon will tell you how long you will have these splints.
- For 48 hours, you may have some oozing from your nose. Roll up a gauze bandage and place it under your nose. Change it as needed.
- The day after surgery, start doing your saline nasal irrigations as we taught you. Irrigate your nose at least 4 times a day.
- To keep your nose from drying out, you may apply a small amount of petroleum jelly (Vaseline or Aquaphor) to the outermost part of each nostril after irrigating.
Managing Pain

Pressure from the splints may cause some discomfort in your face.

- **For mild to moderate pain:** Take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin). Follow the dose instructions on the label. Alternate taking Tylenol and ibuprofen every 3 to 4 hours.

- **For severe pain:** Take the pain medicine (*opioids*) your doctor prescribed. Follow the directions on the bottle.

When to Call

Call your healthcare provider if you have:

- Fever higher than 100°F (37.8°C)
- Pain that is not controlled by your pain medicine
- Bright red bleeding that will not stop
- Signs of infection at your incision:
  - Redness
  - Swelling
  - Warmth
  - Drainage that smells bad
- A reaction to the pain medicine:
  - Nausea and vomiting
  - Rash or itching
  - Problems passing urine (peeing)

Urgent Care

Call 911 right away or go to the emergency room if you have bad reactions to your medicines such as:

- Problems breathing
- Hives
- A lot of bleeding

Follow-up Visit

Your follow-up visit to remove your nasal splints will be 1 to 2 weeks after your surgery. Your appointment is:

Date: ___________________________  Time: _____________