Endoscopic Sinus Surgery

How to prepare and what to expect

This handout explains how to prepare for endoscopic sinus surgery and what to expect afterward.

About Your Surgery

Your doctor has advised that you have endoscopic surgery. This is because medicines are not controlling your sinusitis (sinus inflammation or infection). This surgery will be done to clear blockages in your sinuses.

Endoscopic surgery does not use any incisions. Instead, your surgeon will use tiny instruments and an endoscope, a thin tube with a camera on the end.

Before Your Surgery

Medicines

- For 1 week before your surgery, do not take any aspirin, herbal products, or other products that affect blood clotting. Two of these are ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, and others) and naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn, and others). See attached sheet for more information.

- If you have any questions about your medicines, please call the Pre-Anesthesia Clinic weekdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 206.598.6334. Have a list of your current medicines handy so that you can tell them what you take. They will be able to tell you which medicines to take or not take on the day of your surgery.

- If your doctor has prescribed antibiotics or prednisone to take before surgery, take them as directed.

Plan Ahead

- Know how you will get home from the hospital after your surgery. If your surgeon has said that you will:
- **Go home** the same day as your surgery, you **must** arrange for someone to drive you home from the hospital and stay with you the first night. **You cannot drive or take a bus or taxi by yourself.**

- **Stay overnight** in the hospital, you will be able to drive yourself home the next day.

- **Nasal irrigation** will be a key part of your care after surgery. Practice this before your surgery so you know how to do it.

### Arrival Time

You will receive a call 1 to 2 business days before your surgery date to tell you what time to arrive for your surgery. If you have not received this call by 5 p.m. the day before your surgery, call 206.598.6541 to confirm your arrival time. If you are having surgery on a Monday, you will receive this call the Friday before.

### Day of Surgery

- **Do not** eat or drink anything, unless you are directed otherwise.

- Follow the instructions you received during your pre-op visit about what medicines to take or not take on the day of surgery. If you need to take medicines, take them with **only** a small sip of water.

### After Surgery

#### Precautions and Self-care

- You received general **anesthesia** (medicine to make you sleep) during your surgery. This medicine will affect your thinking and your response time. For 24 hours after your surgery, do **not**:
  - Drive or use machinery
  - Drink alcohol
  - Travel by yourself
  - Sign any legal papers or make important decisions
  - Be responsible for anyone else, such as children, pets, or an adult who needs care

- You will have gauze under your nose to catch oozing. Change the gauze as needed.

- Take your antibiotics as prescribed.

- You will most likely have some pain in your face. For most minor to moderate pain, you may alternate between acetaminophen (Tylenol) and ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin). Only use your prescription pain medicine (opioid) for moderate to severe pain.
- **For 2 weeks**, avoid:
  - Blowing your nose with a lot of effort
  - Straining
  - Lifting anything that weighs more than 15 pounds (a gallon of milk weighs more than 8 pounds)

**Nasal Irrigation**

*Nasal irrigation* (rinsing out your sinuses) is very important after surgery. It keeps your sinuses moist and helps flush out excess mucous and old blood clots. Your doctor or nurse will give you a sinus rinse system to use for this.

- Start nasal irrigation the day after your surgery.
- Irrigate your nose at least 4 times a day.
- Follow the directions in the box.
- **Very gently** blow your nose after irrigation to clear the nasal space.

**Bleeding**

- It is normal to have light bleeding or oozing from your nose or into your throat for up to 2 days after sinus surgery.
- Call your doctor if you have a **steady flow** of blood from your nose or into the back of your throat.

**Follow-up Clinic Visits**

You will see your doctor every 1 to 2 weeks after surgery until you are fully healed. You will set up your next appointment at each visit.

**Return to Work**

Most people take 1 to 2 weeks off work to recover. How long you take off work will be based partly on what you do for a living.

**When to Call**

Call 206.598.4022 if you have:

- Steady bleeding from your nose or into your throat
- A fever higher than 101°F (38.3°C)
- Double vision or trouble seeing
- A headache that is not eased by pain medicine
- More pain
- Rash or itching
- Nausea or vomiting that does not go away