

## **POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR RHINOPLASTY**

1. After surgery it is best for you to rest and sleep with your head elevated on two pillows or in a recliner chair.
2. Apply cold compresses to your eyes as much as possible for the first 48 hours to minimize bruising and swelling. Small gauze pads (2"x2") rotated out from an ice water bath work great because they don't put pressure on the splint. Don't be alarmed if you look worse after the first day since the bruising and swelling usually peaks after 48 to 72 hours.
3. You will probably have bloody nasal drainage for the first few days after surgery so change a drip pad (again a 2"x2" gauze) taped gently under the nose, as needed. You can discontinue using this when the drainage stops. Try to spit out rather than swallow the drainage that runs down your throat as it can upset your stomach.
4. Because your nose may be very stuffy and mouth breathing is common after surgery, using a humidifier or cold air vaporizer in your room at night may help to avoid cotton mouth.
5. Keep the inside of your nostrils and the sutures moist by applying a thin coat of antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin or Neosporin) three times per day with a clean finger or cotton swab. If there is a lot of crusting you can clean the areas with hydrogen peroxide and water on a cotton swab. Don't try to pick anything off as they might be sutures.
6. A light diet is best the day of surgery and this can be advanced as tolerated. Always be sure to have a little food in your stomach before taking pain medication. If you are not having pain, take nothing or Tylenol rather than the narcotic pain pills.
7. To prevent bleeding or air being pushed out through cracks in the healing bone, do not sniff hard or blow your nose for three weeks. If you have to sneeze, do so through your mouth, not your nose.
8. The nasal splint will be on for about a week and it needs to stay dry. It is okay to have your hair washed in a sink or at a salon, but keep the splint dry.
9. Strenuous activity (cardio, heavy lifting, bending over, etc...) should be avoided for three weeks. Avoid bumping or hitting your nose (i.e. contact sports) for 6 weeks.
10. Do not allow glasses or anything else to rest on the bridge of the nose for 4-6 weeks. Tape glasses to your forehead. Contacts can be worn as soon as you can insert them.
11. Because your nose may be dry inside for weeks to months after the surgery try saline nasal spray and putting Aquaphor (a product like Vaseline without bad taste) up your nose at bedtime and as needed.
12. Your nose will be very sensitive to sunlight so use a good sunscreen (SPF 15 or more) or a hat for a few months after surgery.
13. Mederma can be started at 1-2 weeks after surgery for the best looking external scars.