

## Septoplasty Surgery

Commonly referred to as nasal septum repair, septoplasty surgery is performed to restore healthy function to the nasal septum. The nasal septum is the wall of bone and cartilage that separates the nasal passageways and there are many possible negative side effects if it is not properly aligned. A misalignment of the septum can be caused by a physical trauma or it can be malformed from birth. In either case, many septoplasty patients seek the treatment to help improve their overall health and quality of life.

### Post-Operative Instructions:

**Bleeding:** Bright red to light red drainage from the nose is normal for 3-6 days following surgery. The outside gauze dressing needs to be changed when soiled or saturated. A 4 x 4 gauze pad folded in half over the nostrils, held in place with a strip of paper tape is sufficient. It can be normal to change the dressing 12-24 times over the first 24 hours. If the bleeding is more significant than this, the please use the following steps:

1. Perform a vigorous saline rinse
2. Gently blow your nose
3. Spray 4 spray of OTC Afrin Nasal Spray (or decongestant spray) into each nostril every 4 hours as needed.
4. Hold pressure (pinch entire nose closed, both sides) for 20 minutes

**Splints:** In most cases you will have splints in both of your nostrils. These splints are made of soft plastic and are sutured in. They help keep the septum straight for the first few days while it is healing. It can be normal for the splints to move around slightly but should not protrude out of the nose. You will have a post operative appointment 5-7 days after surgery to have the splints removed. This process is typically associated with minimal pain, and you can drive yourself to and from the appointment as long as you have not taken any narcotic pain medicine.

**Medications:** Headache, sinus, or nasal discomfort is common after surgery, and you should have medication for this. Antibiotics and/or a moisturizing saline spray may be prescribed. It is okay to restart oral allergy medications the day after surgery. You can restart medicated nasal sprays after the splints have been removed or 3 days after surgery if no splints were placed.

**Activity:** No swimming or strenuous activities should be performed for 5-7 days after surgery as this might cause bleeding. No lifting over 10 pounds or heavy straining is permitted until 5 days following surgery.

**Diet:** Eat and drink normally. Avoid alcoholic beverages while taking medications.

**Follow-up:** You will need to be seen by your doctor for follow-up 5-7 days after surgery for splint removal and/or need for post-operative cleaning with an endoscope. This appointment should have been made by your doctor's **Surgery Coordinator** at the time of scheduling the surgery. If you are unsure if you have a post operative appointment scheduled, please reach out to your doctor's **Surgery Coordinator** to verify your post operative appointment.

**Saline Irrigations:** Six (6) hours after your sinus surgery, saline irrigations are recommended to reduce crusting and to keep the sinus opening clear. You can purchase an over-the-counter saline kit at your local pharmacy (Neil-Med). Alternatively, you can make your own. Mix 1 teaspoon table salt in 1 quart warm water. Use a "blue-bulb" syringe (available) at your local pharmacy, lean over a sink and irrigate both nasal passages. Irrigate four to five times per day until your post op appointment and then two to three times daily for 4 weeks.

**Call your doctor's office for the following:**

- Excessive, bright red bleeding that **DOES NOT** respond to the measures described above.
- Double or blurred vision.
- Decreased ability to move or close eyes, or eye pain.
- Fever over 102 degrees Fahrenheit that **DOES NOT** respond to Tylenol or Motrin. The fever may go up and down but as long as it responds to Tylenol or Motrin, it is OK to monitor.