

Greenville ENT Post-op Instructions



What to Expect at Home

Septoplasty (Nasal Septum Repair)

Your Recovery

The information below will give you an idea of what to expect following your surgery and what you can do to make sure your recovery goes as smoothly as possible.

There are several normal changes which may seem concerning at first. For instance, you may have some swelling of your nose, upper lip, cheeks, or around your eyes after nasal surgery. You may also have some bruises around your nose and eyes. Your nose may be sore and will bleed some. This soreness and bleeding may last for several days after surgery. You will have a drip pad under your nose to collect mucus and blood. Change it only when it bleeds through. The tip of your nose and your upper lip and gums may be numb. Feeling will return in a few weeks to a few months. Your sense of smell may not be as good after surgery, but it will improve and will often return to normal in 1 to 2 months.

You will probably be able to return to work or school in a few days and to your normal routine in about 3 weeks, but this time period varies depending on your job and the extent of your surgery. Most people recover fully in about

6 weeks. You will have visits with your doctor during the 3 to 4 months after your surgery. Your doctor will check to see that your nose is healing well.

It is important to know that each person recovers at a different pace. The instructions below will help to facilitate your recovery.

Medicine

	You will probably be prescribed narcotic pain medicine.
	You might be prescribed a steroid (Such as prednisone or medrol.)
	If you are prescribed an antibiotic, follow the instructions and complete the full course.
	You should be able to restart any regular medication you were taking prior to surgery, but avoid blood thinners and aspirin for 2 weeks.
	If you think your pain medicine is causing nausea, take your pain medicine after meals and take the nausea medicine (such as Zofran) prescribed for you.
	After any packing is removed, use saline nasal washes to help keep your nasal passages open and to help wash out mucus and bacteria. You can buy saline nose drops at a grocery store or drugstore. Or you can make your own at home by adding 1 teaspoon of salt and 1 teaspoon of baking soda to 2 cups of distilled water. If you make your own, fill a bulb syringe with the solution, insert the tip into your nostril, squeeze gently, and then gently blow your nose.

Activity

	Do not blow your nose for 1-2 weeks after surgery.
	Do not put anything into your nose. If you must sneeze, open your mouth and sneeze naturally.
	Rest when you feel tired. Getting enough sleep will help you recover. You may be more comfortable sleeping propped up or in a recliner, which can also reduce swelling. You may sleep lying down if you are more comfortable that way.
	Try to walk each day. Walking boosts blood flow and helps prevent pneumonia and constipation.
	For 1 week, try not to bend over or lift anything heavier than 10 pounds. This may include a child, heavy grocery bags and milk containers, a heavy briefcase or backpack, cat litter or dog food bags, or a vacuum cleaner.
	You can take a shower or bath, but avoid swimming for 2 weeks.
	Avoid strenuous activities, such as bicycle riding, jogging, weight lifting, or aerobic exercise for 1 week or until your doctor says it is okay.
	You may drive when you are no longer taking prescription pain medication and you feel up to it.
	You may wear your glasses when you wish. Do not wear contacts until the day after the surgery.

Diet

	You may eat your normal diet. If you have nausea, try bland, low-fat foods like plain rice, broiled chicken, toast and yogurt.
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	You may notice that your bowel movements are not as regular after surgery. This is common. Try to avoid constipation and straining with bowel movements. You may want to take a fiber supplement every day. If you have not had a bowel movement after a couple of days, you may take a mild laxative (like Miralax).
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Wound Care

	You will have a drip pad under your nose to collect blood. Change it only when it has bled through. You may have to do this every hour for 24 hours after surgery. When bleeding stops, you can remove it.
	If you have packing in your nose, leave it in. Your doctor will take it out.
	To help with swelling and pain, put ice or a cold pack on your nose for 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Put a thin cloth between the ice and your skin
	Sleep with your head raised up (if you can sleep that way). You can also sleep in a reclining chair.

When should you call for help?

Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

	You pass out (lose consciousness).
	You have severe trouble breathing.
	You have a lot of bleeding.

Call your doctor or seek medical care if:

	Fever over 101F.
	You are bleeding more than expected.
	You cannot keep down fluids.