

Nasal and Sinus Surgery

There are many types of nasal and sinus surgery. You can talk to your doctor about why you are having surgery and what will happen during surgery. Here is some general information about nasal and sinus surgery.

What happens the day of surgery?

Before you come to the hospital, follow all of the instructions you were given in the Pre-Admission Assessment Clinic.

You will come to the Day Surgery Unit the morning of your surgery. The nurses will prepare you for surgery and when you are ready a friend or family member can sit with you until you go to the operating room.

How long is the surgery?

The surgery takes about 1 to 1½ hours depending on the type of surgery you are having.

What happens after surgery?

You will go to the Recovery area to wake up after a general anesthetic. The nurses watch you closely until you are fully awake. When it is safe for you to move, you will go to the Day Surgery Unit to recover a while longer.

Pain control

You may have some pain and discomfort from the surgery and the pressure of the packing. You will be given pain control medication in the hospital and a prescription for when you go home. When you go home, take the pain control medication advised by your doctor when needed.

If you take pain control medication that contains codeine, you need to prevent constipation. You can do this by adding fibre in your diet. Foods containing fibre include fruit, vegetable, bran and whole wheat products. Remember to also drink fluids to keep bowel movements soft and moving.

Bleeding and swelling

If you use aspirin your doctor will tell you to stop taking it 2 weeks before surgery and 2 weeks after surgery to avoid bleeding problems. If you have questions talk to your surgeon.

If you take Non Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory or NSAIDS medication your doctor will tell you to stop taking this 5 days before surgery and 1 week after surgery. If you have any questions talk to your surgeon.

After surgery, bleeding and swelling is normal for 2 to 3 days. There should be less bleeding and swelling each day.

To help control bleeding and swelling, sit up and elevate your head with pillows. You should sleep with two pillows.

Nasal Packing

You may have packing in your nose. This depends on the type of surgery you had and your surgeon. Some packing dissolves by itself and is not removed. Other packing such as packing that contains petroleum jelly is removed before you go home or the next day.

Sometimes a special splint inside the nose is put in and removed in 7 to 10 days. Your surgeon will let you know what kind of packing is in and when and where to have it removed.

Nose and mouth care

- Change the nasal dripper as often as you need to.
- Avoid blowing your nose after the packing is taken out.
- Avoid things that may make you sneeze.
- Rinse your mouth often to prevent dryness.
- Put petroleum jelly such as Vaseline or lip cream on your lips to keep them moist.
- Your surgeon may order a special nasal spray to clean your nose. Follow your doctor's advice if this is ordered for you.

Diet

You may have some nausea after having general anesthesia. If you have an upset stomach or nausea, tell your nurse. You can have medication to help.

You will begin to sip clear fluids when you are able. Most people prefer to eat light meals the first day after general anesthetic. You can return to your normal diet when you feel able.

Drink plenty of fluids. If you have kidney problems or heart disease, talk to your doctor about how much to drink.

Some people become constipated after surgery. This is caused by general anesthetic, not moving around and some pain control medications. To avoid constipation, eat food high in fibre such as whole grain products, and fresh fruit and vegetables.

Bathing and showering

You can take a bath or shower, using warm, not hot water. Have someone close by to make sure you are all right when bathing.

When do I see my doctor again?

Before you leave the hospital, you will be given an appointment to see your doctor in a few days. If you did not get an appointment, contact your doctor when you get home to arrange an appointment.

Contact your doctor if:

- you have bleeding or bleeding increases
- your doctor did not remove your packing and it falls out
- you need to swallow much more often
- you have questions or concerns

If you cannot contact your doctor, go to an Emergency Centre.