

**POST OPERATIVE INFORMATION  
RHINOPLASTY / SEPTOPLASTY**

Please call 202-444-9302 to schedule your post-operative appointment or if you have questions during office hours (8:30-5:00). Many patients are seen by our Nurse Practitioner, Christina Barra, during their first post-operative appointments if Dr. Baker is unavailable. You may also call her at 202-444-7962 if you have questions. She returns phone calls at the end of each clinic day. If you need a call sooner you can call Dr. Baker's assistant at 202-444-9302 and she can route your call accordingly.

**After Hours Care:**

Call 202-444-7243 and ask for the Plastic Surgery Resident on call.

**Wound/Incision Care:**

You may shower 24 hours after surgery unless otherwise directed. In the meantime, please sponge bathe as it is important to maintain good hygiene. All dressing should be left in place, unless otherwise directed, as they will be removed at your first post-op appointment. You may have clear adhesive glue over your incision. This will slowly peel off over the next few weeks and you may shower with it in place. It is normal to have drainage from your nose which may be tinged with blood. Usually the drainage decreases significantly after 36 hours and becomes clearer. You can keep your nostrils clean and free of drainage using Q-tips dipped in hydrogen peroxide, but only reach inside the nose as far as the cotton end of the Q-tip.

**Swelling:**

Depending on the specific nasal surgery you had done, you may have been given a medication for swelling called a Medrol dose pack. The directions for this medication are printed directly on the foil pack and should be followed exactly as printed. The medication should not be stopped abruptly. You should expect to have more swelling and bruising the morning following surgery as swelling will peak 24-48 hours after the procedure. If you can comfortably sleep propped up on pillows this may help to reduce the swelling. If you wear glasses, you may tape them to your forehead with a small loop of tape passed over the nose piece. Do not allow them to rest directly on the nose for the first 10 days after surgery. Once you begin to wear them again, they may require an adjustment since the shape of your nose may have changed. When you first begin to wear your glasses, you may notice indentations where they touch your nose. These indentations are not harmful and they will decrease as the swelling of your nose decreases. Almost all of the noticeable swelling should be gone 2-3 weeks after surgery but the thicker areas such as the nasal tip will continue to improve in definition for several months. Remember that the degree of swelling may be different on each side of the nose even if the same procedure was performed. Don't worry about these differences for the first 3 weeks after surgery. Improvement in air flow through the nose may not be noticeable until the swelling decreases 2-3 weeks after surgery. The tip of your nose will be quite numb for the first several weeks after surgery. This is normal and as the skin nerves regenerate your sensation should return. Normal sensation could take several months.



**Medications:**

You have been prescribed a narcotic pain medication. Narcotic pain medications can cause constipation. You may find it helpful to take an over the counter stool softener while you are taking the pain medication. It is not unusual to have nausea after surgery. You have been prescribed Zofran that can be taken for the nausea. You received IV antibiotics during surgery. You may have also been sent home with a prescription for an antibiotic. If you were given an antibiotic prescription, it is important to complete the entire course. You may have also given a medication for swelling called a Medrol dose pack. The directions for this medication are printed directly on the foil pack. Try to avoid nasal sprays such as Afrin or other types of antihistamine nasal sprays.

**Diet:**

Diet restrictions will be specified prior to leaving the hospital as certain procedures necessitate you maintain a soft or liquid diet for a period of time after surgery. Your throat may be sore following general anesthesia. You may try over the counter throat lozenges. No alcoholic beverages while taking pain medication. We recommend a high fiber diet and lots of liquids while taking pain medication in order to prevent constipation. You may also want to take an over the counter stool softener such as Pericolace while taking pain medication.

**Activity:**

You will be drowsy after your surgery but this should begin to wear off overnight and into the next day. It is important to begin to resume normal light activity as tolerated. Your energy will return more quickly if you begin to resume normal activity the day after surgery. You should do no heavy lifting (greater than 10 pounds) and no strenuous (activity that raises your blood pressure) activity for 2-4 weeks. Facial surgery patients should avoid contact sports for 6 weeks after surgery. During this time, strong blowing of the nose could disrupt the contoured nasal bone and septum as well as cause significant bleeding. We will specify permissible activity levels as you proceed through your post-operative course. You should not drive while taking pain medication. If your nose begins to bleed at any time, try to relax and lie down with your head slightly elevated. Use a moist washcloth and apply gentle pressure to the nostril area for 15-20 minutes. If this does not work, call the office if it is during normal business hours. If it is after hours and you can't get your nose to stop bleeding you should go to the Emergency Room.

**Reasons to Call:**

- Temperature of 101.5 or above
- Excessive drainage and/or bleeding
- Increased redness
- Increased swelling or abnormal swelling of one side compared to the other
- Pain that is not tolerable after taking pain medication
- Inability to urinate within 6 hours of leaving the hospital