



SOUTHERN UTAH  
Ear, Nose and Throat

## POSTOPERATIVE CARE FOLLOWING NASAL AND SINUS SURGERY

### **General instructions:**

Every operation is accompanied by swelling of the operative tissues. This is usually greatest on the second or third days following surgery. The majority of the swelling will subside within two weeks. There are several things you can do to help minimize the swelling:

1. During the day, sit upright as much as possible.
2. Sleep with your head and chest elevated so that your nose is above your heart. The best situation would be resting in a reclining chair. If you don't have a recliner, then use three or four pillows while in bed. You may also use a sofa and place the pillows against the arm of the sofa.
3. Avoid bending over or lifting anything heavier than 20 lbs. If you must retrieve something off the ground, squat down, bending the knees while keeping the back straight and your head up.
4. Your nose will be stuffy and you can expect blood-tinged drainage for a week or more.

### **Other things you should be aware of that promote a good surgical result and faster healing:**

1. Avoid smoking and drinking alcohol.
2. Continue your antibiotics until finished and use pain medicine as needed. Avoid aspirin, Advil, Motrin, Naproxen, etc., as these products can cause bleeding.
3. It is wise to avoid picking up or holding small children for two weeks after surgery since they have an uncanny way of hitting your freshly operated nose.
4. Run a cool-mist humidifier near your face as much as possible.
5. For the first 24 hours, mainly liquids (as opposed to solids) are encouraged. After that, solids may be consumed. However, for the first three days avoid foods that are difficult to chew or digest.
6. Occasionally a patient will have bleeding from the eye. This is a result of blood working its way from the nose up the tear duct and exiting at the corner of the eye. This is of no consequence, although it's alarming to see.

### **Nasal care:**

1. Be careful not to bump your nose.
2. Do not blow your nose for two weeks.
3. Avoid sneezing. If a sneeze is inevitable, sneeze through your mouth to avoid pressure in your nose.
4. Wear a "moustache" dressing as long as you are having drainage from the nose. Avoid using tissues or handkerchiefs to wipe the nose. Please don't rub or pick at the nostril openings as this may introduce infection.

### **Report:**

1. Any excessive pain.
2. Fever over 100° F (oral) or 101° F (under the armpit).
3. Any injury to your nose.
4. Any fresh active bleeding that either comes forward out the nose or goes down the back of the throat.
5. Double vision.
6. Loss of vision.
7. Bruising of the eyes (unless you have undergone rhinoplasty or surgically breaking the outside of the nose, which will cause bruising of the eyelids).

***Unless otherwise instructed, you will generally be seen one week following nasal surgery in the office to remove the packing and then again two weeks later.***