FORM
CAMPUS
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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Rhinoplasty (Nose Surgery)

The following aftercare information will help make your surgery safe and uneventful. It is important that you understand all of it. If you have any questions, please ask your surgeon or our team. In some cases there will be variations to these instructions, and these will be discussed with you.

DRESSING

There is typically a splint or tape on your nose after surgery. Please leave this on and keep it dry until your first post-operative visit, when it will be removed. Immediately after surgery, you may also have a "moustache" gauze dressing taped to your upper lip. This catches any dripping blood; once the dripping stops, usually a day or two after surgery, the gauze can be left off. Occasionally, gauze packing is placed in the nostrils. If you have this packing, you will be seen at the office the day after surgery to have it removed.

PAIN MEDICATION

Most patients are pleasantly surprised by how limited their postoperative discomfort is. You have been prescribed Tylenol Extra Strength, Celebrex (Celecoxib), which is an anti-inflammatory, and Hydromorphone, which is a strong narcotic painkiller. The Tylenol should be taken on schedule, every 6 hours. The Celebrex is to be taken every 12 hours. The Hydromorphone is to be taken as needed, but not more often than every 6 hours. This combination of anti-inflammatory (Celebrex) and analgesic (Tylenol Extra Strength or a stronger pain pill) is now recognized as the most effective way of treating postoperative discomfort. Both can be stopped when the discomfort subsides.

Please note that all pain pills cause constipation. If you are inclined to become constipated, you should consider using a stool softener such as Colace 200 mg twice a day, and a laxative such as Milk of Magnesia, 15 to 30 cc at night. Drinking plenty of fluids and eating fruit also reduces constipation.

EATING AFTER SURGERY

Patients may experience nausea after a general anesthetic. It is therefore wise to drink clear fluids (apple juice, black tea, flat pop) until the stomach feels settled. Then try eating clear soup and crackers. A normal diet is usually possible the next day. On rare occasions, a patient may feel nauseated for a few days after surgery. Gravol tablets may then be helpful.

WOUND CARE

Starting the day after surgery, please cleanse all incision lines at the base of the nose twice a day with a Q-Tip and mild soap and water. The Q-Tip can be passed into the nostril up to the length of its cotton tip. After cleansing, apply a generous amount of Polysporin ointment or Vaseline to the nostrils and incision lines. Once the dissolving stitches have fallen out and the clots have dropped off, the Polysporin ointment can be stopped. After the first 2 weeks, a high-quality scar cream (available from the office) should be applied to the scar line twice a day for 2 to 3 months.

BRUISING AND SWELLING

Swelling and bruising are a normal part of rhinoplasty. Wet ice packs should not be applied to the nose, as they may loosen the nasal splint. Dry cold gel packs are permissible but of limited value, as the bruising and swelling come from under the splint. Bruising and swelling will subside more quickly with head elevation, and it is helpful to sleep with an extra pillow for the first three weeks after surgery.

It is often difficult to breathe through the nose because of internal swelling, and most patients breathe through their mouth. To minimize throat dryness in the morning, a cool mist vaporizer can be used at night.

Bruising may take two weeks to subside, but some make-up can generally be applied after a week to conceal the discolouration. About 80% of the swelling is typically gone within three weeks, while the last 20% takes 9 to 12 months to completely subside. It is common to have more bruising and swelling on one side than the other. This will even out with time.

ARNICA FOR BRUISING

Arnica has been shown to help decrease bruising and reduce how long bruising is visible. A combination of oral pellets and topical gel is recommended, but if you would prefer to use only one, the pellets are likely more effective. The pellets should be started two days before your procedure and continued for 3-5 days after your procedure. The gel can be started as soon as massaging it in is tolerable, and can be continued until the bruising has subsided. Storing the gel in the fridge will also provide a cooling, soothing effect on the bruised area.

Do not take off the dressing, and **do not** apply the gel on the incision itself until it has completely healed. Apply it around the procedure area to minimize swelling and bruising. **Do not** use Arnica if you are allergic to the daisy flower.

NOSEBLEEDS

Activities that increase your pulse or the blood pressure in your face can contribute to nosebleeds. We therefore suggest that you avoid any exercise that increases your heart rate or blood pressure for the first two weeks. You can start gently blowing your nose 2 weeks after surgery. When picking something up off the floor in the first two weeks, please bend your knees rather than swinging your head down.

These instructions are general guidance. Your surgeon or provider may give you instructions specific to your care, and those take priority.

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EARLY FEVER

A low-grade fever (up to 37.8°C) is not uncommon the day after surgery. It usually occurs after a general anesthetic and results from small collections of mucus in the lungs. It is therefore important after a general anesthetic to take frequent deep breaths and to cough deeply. Coughing clears the lungs and corrects the low-grade fever. Failure to clear the lungs adequately can, on rare occasions, lead to a lung infection.

WOUND INFECTION

Fortunately, wound infections are uncommon. Minor leakage of clear, yellowish fluid from the stitches may occur and persist until the stitches are out. This fluid is not an infection, and is managed with soap and water washes two to three times a day, followed by Polysporin ointment and a light dressing. If the drainage from the wound becomes "soupy" and smells, or is associated with increasing redness, pain and swelling, a deeper infection may be occurring.

> Do not hesitate to phone the office or see your family doctor if this happens. You will need to be seen, as you may need antibiotics.

WEARING GLASSES AND PRESSURE ON THE NOSE

Contact lenses can be worn immediately after surgery. Glasses are best worn with a piece of tape supporting the central bridge of the glasses to the forehead, slightly above the nose, so that no lateral pressure from the glasses is transmitted to the nose itself. Glasses can be worn normally after two weeks. You should not participate in contact sports for 8 weeks, to avoid accidental trauma to the nose that could cause displacement.

NASAL APPEARANCE

Immediately after surgery, there may be some uneven swelling of the sides of the nose or the nasal tip. While this swelling will make the nose look asymmetric at first, the asymmetry will even out as it subsides. For a few days after surgery, swelling of the nasal tip may also make it look as if it is rotated upwards too much. This too is temporary and will settle down.

NUMBNESS

It is not uncommon to have numbness of the nasal tip after surgery. This will not affect your sense of smell. Normal feeling usually returns within six to nine months.

NASAL SPRAYS

Please avoid antihistamine or decongestant nasal sprays, as they further dry out the lining of the nose and can cause more bleeding. Salt water (saline) nasal sprays, such as Salinex, can be used starting the day after surgery to help keep the nose clear and moist.

MOBILITY

As a routine, it is important to be up and walking on the day of surgery, and prolonged bed rest is discouraged. Lying in bed can increase the rare but ever-present risk of developing blood clots in the calves, which in turn can cause pulmonary emboli. It is good to go for short walks, and to take frequent naps if you are feeling tired. For the first two weeks, avoid any heavy lifting or exercise that makes your heart beat fast, as more bleeding could result. After two weeks, normal activities can be resumed. After 4 weeks, you can return to normal (non-contact) exercise. Expect some temporary extra swelling after periods of more intense activity.

TANNING

Fresh scars and areas that have been bruised should not be tanned for at least four months after surgery. Early tanning can cause permanent hyperpigmentation of the scar and the surrounding areas. Normal tanning can resume after four months, but please remember that tanning causes premature skin aging and skin cancer.

DRIVING

You must not drive for at least 24 hours after a sedative or a general anesthetic, or if you feel drowsy for any reason. Do not drive if you are having any pain, as the pain may cause you to jerk the steering wheel and lose control. You must also avoid driving if you are in any way restricted in your mobility or your vision, as this may compromise safe driving.

PROLONGED NASAL SWELLING

In some patients, the swelling in the nose may be very slow to subside. In such cases, it may be helpful to tape the nose in the evening and overnight. The tape needs to be elastic and is usually applied side to side, over the bridge, just above the tip of the nose. We will show you how to apply the tape.

FATIGUE AND "FEELING DOWN"

While the results of plastic surgery are typically gratifying and uplifting, it is not uncommon for patients to have "down" times. Early on, there is the residual effect of the anesthetic, coupled with discomfort, swelling and bruising at the surgical site. This is followed by the typically slow maturation of the scar itself. These frustrations can weigh on you, making you question why you chose to have surgery in the first place. You are not alone with these thoughts, and they are entirely normal. Rest assured that well over 90% of patients are pleased with the results of their surgery, and the apprehension and "down" times are eventually replaced by feelings of satisfaction and confidence.

QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

Every effort is made to provide you with a surgical experience that is safe and as comfortable as possible. Any suggestions you have that might improve the experience are much appreciated. If you have any questions, concerns or problems, please call the office at 416-447-6176.

> If there is an urgent situation and we are not immediately available, please go to the emergency department at North York General Hospital or your closest emergency department.

We hope you have a speedy recovery from your surgery.