

# NASAL SURGERY

## RISKS OF NON-TREATMENT

Persistent nasal obstruction or other nasal symptoms.

## NON-SURGICAL TREATMENT FOR SINUSITIS

Non-surgical treatment includes decongestants, steroid nasal sprays, and saltwater rinses of the nasal cavity. Allergy treatment may help some patients with nasal complaints. If a structural problem is causing nasal obstruction or other nasal symptoms, surgery is usually the most effective option for treatment.

## NASAL SURGERY—HOW IT'S DONE

Under general anesthesia in the operating room, the deviated portions of the septum are straightened or removed. This is usually performed through incisions inside the nose. Normal tissue is preserved as much as possible. If the turbinate tissues are enlarged, these structures will be reduced. Packing is sometimes required if bleeding has been brisk in surgery. Plastic splints are usually required following surgery to hold the repositioned septum in place. Splints and packs are removed about one week later in the office. Sutures used to close the intranasal incisions are absorbable and will dissolve over 1-2 weeks.

## RISKS OF SURGERY

There can be bleeding, infection or scarring at the surgery site. Rare complications from surgery include spinal fluid leakage and serious bleeding. Cosmetic changes to the appearance of the nose are possible. There is a slight risk of a septal perforation. The most common risk of surgery is that the nasal obstruction will not be completely resolved. Aspirin, Ibuprofen, and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications aggravate bleeding from surgery and are best avoided during the two weeks before surgery. Use Tylenol instead.

## RECOVERY TIME

The day after surgery you may be up and about with very limited activity. Most people can return to light duty after the splints are removed (about one week). If the work is strenuous, you may need up to two weeks off work. Some people find it more comfortable to elevate the head of the bed or sleep in a recliner to reduce the swelling and bleeding. There will be some blood-tinged nasal drainage and crusting for 4-6 weeks.

## POST-SURGICAL CARE

1. Rinse the nose with Ocean Spray salt solution 6-8 times daily.
2. Antibiotic ointment can be applied to the nasal incisions at the front of the nose. This will help keep crusting to a minimum and facilitate healing.
3. Use Oxymetazoline nasal spray if there is significant bleeding following surgery.
4. Take pain medicine and antibiotics (if given) as prescribed.
5. Don't blow the nose, stoop, or strain for one week after surgery.
6. Call the office or go to the ER for severe continuous bleeding.