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Rhinoplasty (Nose Surgery) - Post Operative Instructions

At home after surgery: Dr. Hoefflin recommends resting quietly for the first 48 hours after surgery. You should walk or ambulate (with assistance) around your home every couple of hours. Ambulating is one of the best ways of maintaining lower extremity blood flow and preventing deep venous blood clots (DVTs).

Positioning: When resting, keep your head and back elevated on several pillows (30-40 degrees) for 2-3 days after surgery, as this will minimize any bruising or swelling. In addition, flex your thighs by placing several pillows behind your knees. Avoid bending, lifting, or straining for one week after surgery. Avoid bending, straining, or any activity that increases pressure on your face or nose for the first week after surgery.

Ice compresses: Apply ice compresses to your face for the first 2 days following surgery to minimize your postoperative swelling and bruising. Small frozen bags of peas or corn are ideal because of their flexibility in being “molded” to fit your face.

Diet: Start with a light diet, preferably liquids or soups, and then progress to a regular diet after 24 hours. This will minimize any post-operative nausea. Avoid salt as it can promote swelling. For two weeks avoid foods that require excessive lip movement, such as apples, corn on the cob, etc.

Oral Antibiotics: Dr. Hoefflin will prescribe you either Keflex (Cephalexin) 500 mg or Cleocin (Clindamycin) 300 mg (if allergic to penicillin or cephalosporins). Keflex should be taken 1 tablet, four times per day; Cleocin should be taken 1 tablet, three times per day. All antibiotics should be taken with food.

Discomfort: Any discomfort or soreness can be minimized with pain medication. Start with ½ a tablet of a pain pill initially, of which may be followed every 3 – 4 hours by another. It is best to take pain medication with food. Keep in mind that the pain medication can cause constipation. A helpful adjunct is to replace every other dose of pain medication with a tablet of Tylenol (650 mg) to help minimize inflammation. Avoid driving or consuming alcohol while taking prescription pain medicine.

Nasal Splint: Do not manipulate your nasal splint or nasal tapes. Dr. Hoefflin will remove your splint one week after surgery. After your nasal splint is removed, you can gently wash your nose with a mild soap, i.e. Cetaphil. Moisturizing creams can be used if the nose is dry.

Wound Care: Gently clean the inside edges of your nostrils with Hydrogen Peroxide (available over the counter) soaked Q-tips, followed by a thin layer of Neosporin (available over the counter) ointment 2-3 times per day. This will prevent crusting from forming.

Nasal Discharge: You will probably have some bloody nasal discharge for several days following your surgery. Dr. Hoefflin will place a “drip pad” which should be left on for 24 hours, and may be replaced as needed. However, you should call our office if the bleeding does not stop. To prevent bleeding, avoid blowing for your nose for the first 2 weeks after surgery.

Washing your face/Showering: You may shower and wash your face on the 2nd day after surgery using a gentle cleanser, i.e. Cetaphil. Avoid directly washing your nose, but rather use a damp warm cloth to gently wash your face. Avoid submerging your incisions in a bath, swimming pool, or whirlpool for two weeks after surgery.

Swelling: Maximal swelling typically occurs two to three days after surgery, then begins to dramatically improve. Mild bruising typically resolves within 7-10 days after surgery. Mild or subtle inflammation may take up to several weeks to completely resolve. **Arnica Montana** (can be purchased at our office), taken both before and after surgery, can assist in decreasing any postoperative swelling or bruising. It may take approximately one year for all the nasal swelling to resolve and to achieve your final aesthetic result.

Activity: It is important to refrain from any strenuous activities for the first 2 weeks after surgery. **After 2 weeks**, you may engage in light activity (i.e. light walking). **By 4 weeks**, stretching, yoga, or light-weight exercises can be resumed. Heavy weights and all pre-surgery activity may be resumed **after 6 weeks**. You may drive several days to one week after your rhinoplasty surgery, provided you can respond and stop in emergency situations.

Sutures: All intranasal sutures are absorbable and typically dissolve one week after surgery. If external sutures were placed, these will typically be removed by Dr. Hoefflin after 5-7 days.

Sensation: It is normal to have numbness of the nasal tip, and occasionally the front teeth, following rhinoplasty. This gradually subsides after 2-3 months as your body progresses through the healing process.

Eyeglasses: After your splint is removed, do not wear eyeglasses, or allow anything else to rest on your nose for 4 weeks. Glasses should be taped to the forehead. Dr. Hoefflin can show you how to follow these instructions.

Follow-up appointment: Your first postoperative appointment to see Dr. Hoefflin typically occurs 24 hours after surgery. This should be scheduled prior to your surgery.

Massaging exercises: Massaging exercises are initiated one week after surgery, which assists in reducing residual post-operative inflammation as well as reducing the appearance of your incisional scars. Dr. Hoefflin will provide you with information on

such exercises during your post-operative appointment.

Minimizing long-term scar visibility: Avoid direct sunlight exposure to your healing scars for the first year following surgery. Wear a wide brim hat. Select a sunscreen with zinc oxide and SPF of 30 or greater for maximal protection. Scars typically fade in months to a year after your surgery.

Smoking: Do not smoke. This is important. Smoking delays healing and can increase your risk of complications.

Concerns:

Dr. Hoefflin can be reached 24 hours a day for any concerns. He can be contacted directly through his office or answering exchange at (310) 858-9105.

Please notify Dr. Hoefflin if:

- If you experience increased nasal bleeding which does not stop after several minutes of gentle nasal pressure;
- If you experience a significant increase in pain not relieved by medication;
- If you develop a temperature above 101.5° F, or if you develop redness (like a sunburn) around your incisions;
- If you have any yellowish or greenish drains from the incisions or notice a foul odor;
- If you have any side effects to medications, such as rash, nausea, headache, or vomiting.

The quality of your rhinoplasty procedure may be compromised if you fail to return for any scheduled post-op visits, or follow Dr. Hoefflin's pre- and post-operative instructions.