

Concord Otolaryngology

Head & Neck Surgery P.A.

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Post Operative Instruction SEPTOPLASTY and/or TURBINECTOMY

Background Information:

SEPTOPLASTY – This is a procedure performed on the internal support structure of the nose called the septum. The septum divides the nose into two separate chambers. When this cartilage becomes deviated or “crooked”, airflow through the nose becomes restricted. The object of the surgery is to straighten the cartilage of the septum so that the patient’s nasal breathing will be improved. All incisions are made on the inside of the nose and, since the external bones are not fractured, there is generally no swelling or “black eyes” after the surgery.

TURBINECTOMY – A turbinectomy is a reduction in the size of the turbinates. These structures warm and humidify the air we breathe while simultaneously congesting and decongesting from side to side. Sometimes they are enlarged enough to interfere with nasal breathing and sinus drainage especially if the septal cartilage is curved towards a specific side. A combination of septoplasty and turbinectomy surgery is an outpatient procedure routinely performed under general anesthesia.

Common Post-Operative Expectations & Instructions

- **Nasal Packing** – Dr. Daniell and Dr. Carwell usually place a non-dissolvable nasal packing in each nostril after turbinectomy surgery. This allows for additional pressure against the raw turbinate edges in an effort to reduce active bleeding. The packing is removed 1-2 days after surgery.
- **Nasal Packing** – Dr Reddy does not automatically use nasal packing. If the packing is necessary at the time of the surgery you will be instructed when to call the office for the removal (usually 1-2 days after surgery).
- **Nasal Splints** – A piece of medical grade plastic material that adds additional pressure and support to both sides of the septum is sewn in place. This is removed in the office approximately 1 week after surgery.
- **Nasal Dressing** – You will be discharged home with a nasal dressing designed to absorb active nasal drainage. Change gauze as needed. Expect a bloody appearance that should decrease in amount over 48 – 72 hours post operatively. When drainage has decreased, a fresh cotton ball in each nostril can be used.
- **Discomfort** - Expect a moderate amount of pain and pressure. Use your prescribed pain medication or over-the-counter Tylenol medication as needed. No aspirin products. You will notice a decrease in pressure once the packing has been removed.
- **Increased Nasal Congestion** - **DO NOT BLOW YOUR NOSE!** Do not use any decongestants either in pill or nasal spray form unless first cleared by your doctor. Elevate your head and upper body on several pillows to decrease congestion.

Septoplasty / Turbinectomy

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- Diet – Start with clear liquids and progress to normal diet as soon as you are able. A temporary loss of taste is not uncommon.
- Activity – Avoid strenuous blood pressure elevating activity for 1 week (gym workouts, lifting greater than 20 lbs, etc.)
- Shower/Bathing—Resume bathing 24 hours after surgery.
- Driving—Do not drive if taking narcotic pain medication.
- Travel – No flying or extended trips until after 1 week post op visit. Short outings to the store, restaurant and outdoors are ok.

Comfort Measures

- Use a bedside vaporizer/humidifier
- Encourage frequent sipping of fluids/Popsicles
- Vaseline/lip balm to decrease chapping
- Sleep with your head elevated

Call the Office at 603-224-2353 if you experience the following:

- Brisk bleeding
- Problems with medication (controlling pain, nausea, rash etc.)
- Temperature of 101° or higher despite use of medication
- Increased redness or swelling of the nose
- Nausea or vomiting not relieved by medication
- Difficulty urinating after surgery
- Increased nasal crusting