

Postoperative instructions for nasal surgery

1. Following surgery you may eat whatever you feel up to. Please do not start with a heavy meal as your first meal following surgery. Some patients experience slight nausea following surgery. Eating a heavy meal can trigger vomiting or make the nausea worse. I would recommend starting with some Gatorade or Sprite first. If you are able to tolerate this without problems, I would suggest progressing to soup. If you can also tolerate this, you may eat whatever you feel like. If you do not feel like eating solid food, please maintain your fluid intake with at least ½ cup of fluid every 30-45 minutes.
2. If you do feel nauseated, stop all oral intake for 6 hours. Then slowly start up again with Gatorade/Sprite and progress slowly back up to regular food.
3. You may feel quite drowsy during the first evening following surgery. This is perfectly fine. Sleep whenever your body tells you to. When you sleep, try to sleep on two pillows. This will minimize bruising and swelling. Continue doing this for at least 3-5 days if possible, preferably for 7 days.
4. You can use ice packs to reduce the swelling. If using icepacks, separate your skin from the ice pack with a towel, etc. so that the ice pack does not stick to the underlying skin. Also, use ice packs for 30 minutes at a time, and give your skin at least 30 minutes time off before applying the ice pack again. **DO NOT SLEEP WITH THE ICE PACK ON.**
5. You are free to get up and walk following surgery. You might be drowsy on the first night. Therefore, please have someone help you to the bathroom, in and out of bed, etc. This will prevent you from having an accidental fall.
6. Your nasal dressing consists of a nasal splint and gauze underneath the nose. This gauze is called the drip pad. Its job is to catch the excess blood. During the first night following surgery, you may have quite a bit of bloody nasal drainage. It is normal to sometimes have to change the nasal drip pad 8-10 times per hour. Do not fear. This drainage does not continue forever, and usually tapers off within 24-48 hours. The nasal drip pad is the **ONLY** part of the nasal dressing that you have to change.
7. Your nose will be packed following surgery. The packing will stay in place for 5-7 days. This sometimes causes concern to our patients. This is not something you should worry about. Your body knows what to do. You will open your mouth and automatically breathe through your mouth just like instances when you have a cold, etc.
8. The day following surgery, you are free to get up and walk around without assistance. I actually recommend casual walking. Casual walking mobilizes lymph fluid and reduces the duration of bruising and swell.

9. Do not lift heavy weight (greater than 5 lbs.) for 1 week, and do not work-out or run for 7-10 days. Once you have been examined at your postoperative visit, you will be cleared to return to full activity.
10. You have been prescribed narcotic pain medications. These medications can make you drowsy. Do not drive while on narcotic pain medications. Once you feel that you do not require the narcotic pain medications, transition yourself to extra-strength Tylenol. Do not substitute Motrin, aspirin, Advil, Alleve, Naproxen, or Ibuprofen. These medications can thin your blood and make you more prone to bruising, bleeding and swelling. I do not want you taking these medications for 7 days following surgery.
11. It is okay to taper yourself off the pain medications. It is IMPORTANT to finish the whole course of antibiotics.
12. If your work does not require heavy lifting or exertion, you may return to work when you are no longer on the narcotic pain medications
13. Do not make legal decisions while on narcotic pain medications.
14. For the first 2-3 days following surgery, you are required to do leg exercises. There is a good likelihood that you might be lying down for extended periods of time during the first few days. To prevent blood clots in your legs, it is recommended that you get up and walk, or perform 10 leg raises every 2 hours. Once you start walking during the day, you can stop such exercises.
15. You may shower from the neck down on the day following surgery. The nasal splint is attached to the skin with a special type of skin glue. Do not get your face wet in the shower. You may use a wash cloth to wash your face, but avoid getting the nasal splint wet. On the morning of your 1 week follow-up appointment, shower, and get the nasal splint wet. This will loosen the glue and make it easier to remove the splint during your postoperative visit.
16. Your postoperative appointment will be between 5-7 days following surgery. At this appointment, your nasal splint and the packing will be removed. This is not painful, and you should not be anxious or scared.
17. You cannot drive for the first 24 hours. You may resume driving when you are no longer taking the narcotic pain medications, and you have no limitation of your visual field.
18. You will need someone to bring you to the office on the day after surgery for your first postoperative visit.
19. You also need to have someone stay with you during the first night following surgery. If you need help in this matter, please call our office ahead of the day of surgery so that preparations can be made.
20. If you have an emergency, call 911. If you have any problems during your postoperative period, please call 281-557-3223. Someone will return your call 24 hours a day/7 days a week.
21. Symptoms to definitely call the office
 - a. Fever greater than 101.5°F/38.5°C
 - b. Difficulty breathing/shortness of breath
 - c. Changes in vision
 - d. Massive bleeding from operative site
 - e. Extreme swelling that comes about over a few minutes
 - f. Increasing pain

22. Please bring these instructions with you for your postoperative appointment.
23. Here are the questions to ask during your postoperative appointment
 - a. When can I return to work?
 - b. Do I have any activity restrictions?
24. Following your first postoperative visit, your next visit will be at the 3 month point.
25. During this time period, there are several things you need to do.
 - a. Use nasal saline spray on both sides of your nose at least 4 times a day. You cannot use too much, only too little. Nasal saline has no side effects, and does not interact with any medications
 - b. If you use flonase, nasonex or other nasal sprays, discuss this with Dr. Athre before starting yourself back on these medications.
 - c. Use Neil's Sinus rinse (available at CVS, Walgreens, etc.) at least once a day, preferably twice daily.
 - d. These medications will help keep the nasal mucosa moist and will promote healing at a faster rate
26. You may start to use makeup within 72 hours after surgery.
27. Thank you again for choosing Athré Surgical Associates.