

After Surgery Instructions for  
**ENDOSCOPIC SINUS SURGERY**

**Activity** *Any reasonable activity is fine at any time*, but refrain from strenuous activity (defined as high heart rates and/or lots of sweating) for 2 weeks after surgery to minimize the risk of nasal bleeding. Do not blow your nose for one week after surgery. To clear the nose, sniff the secretions back and spit them out. If you must sneeze, open your mouth and turn the sneeze into a cough to avoid nose pain.

**Pain** Congestion and stuffiness, similar to a sinus headache, are generally the most bothersome symptoms the first week. Pain should be only mild to moderate after surgery, and your pain medication should help. Pain medication cannot be expected to *entirely eliminate* pain. You should not have swelling or discoloration on the outside of your nose or face. Severe eye pain, decreased vision or double vision, should be reported to the doctor immediately. Do not take aspirin, ibuprofen, or other anti-inflammatory medications for ten days prior to and two weeks after surgery, as these medications thin the blood and increase the risk of bleeding.

**Bleeding** Mild, intermittent bleeding is common during the first one or two days after surgery. Should bleeding be persistent or profuse, you should contact the doctor. At the surgery facility a small piece of gauze is often taped under the nose to prevent dripping of blood or mucus. This practice may be continued at home as long as necessary, but nothing needs to be put on or under the nose once secretions slow down. Cleaning accumulation of blood or mucus from around the nostrils is fine anytime. Rarely, profuse bleeding can occur on a delayed basis up to two weeks after surgery, and for this you should contact the doctor.

**Cleaning** *No specific cleaning or maintenance regimen needs to be done by patients during the first week after surgery.* The nose is typically congested and sore on the inside, and aggressive cleaning efforts are generally more bothersome than helpful. Over-the-counter salt water (i.e. saline) nasal spray and/or decongestant nose sprays containing the active ingredient 'oxymetazoline' (such as Afrin, 12-hour, Sinex, 4-Way, or Dristan) can be used during the first week to help keep the nose clearer, but nothing really works except giving it time to heal. Medications often tried before surgery such as antihistamines, decongestants, and nose sprays will give little or no benefit to the nose and sinuses during the healing period and they do not need to be taken. Many times an effort is made to discontinue these medications after a successful surgery. Your doctor will clean your nose thoroughly at postoperative visits (generally twice in the first 2-4 weeks) and these visits are important both to feel better and to assure proper healing.

**Other** During surgery, a small gelatin roll(s) may be placed in the sinus opening(s) deep in the nose to improve healing. These are too small and soft for patients to see or feel and they just dissolve without noticing. If one slips out you may see it. It is not a concern and does not need to be replaced (it looks like a piece of clear tape folded over).

**Additional Information**

Call Ear, Nose & Throat Specialty Care, at (214) 826-3681, or for after hours emergencies call (214) 346-1359