



Septoplasty Surgery Perioperative Instructions

We would like to make sure all your questions are answered before your procedure. We previously discussed the risks, benefits and alternatives to having the procedure at your pre-operative appointment, but please contact us if you have further questions.



In this informative video, Dr. Manning discusses the basics of septoplasty:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tA6Fs8emBkw>. If you would like to learn more, we would like to direct you to the trusted information at this website <http://www.entnet.org/content/patient-health>.

- It is important for your care team to know about your medications. If you take any medications regularly, please write each one down. Include dose amount and how often the medications are taken. Remember to bring this list with you to your procedure. Be sure to leave your medications at home.



If your health history requires it, do not forget to obtain written clearance for anesthesia from your PCP or appropriate physician. This would have been discussed at your pre-operative appointment.



If your health history requires it, do not forget your pre-surgical testing at the surgery center. This would have been arranged at the time you scheduled surgery. You DO NOT have to fast for this work up.

Appointment date/time: _____

- Illness can interfere with your procedure, so please let us know if you are experiencing any flu-like symptoms such as fever over 100F, chest congestion, wheezing, vomiting, diarrhea or ongoing cough with mucus (phlegm).

One Week Before Surgery

- **For one week prior to the procedure, DO NOT** take any medications that contain aspirin, ibuprofen or naproxen. Also, stop herbal medications and supplements. Why? These medications interfere with blood clotting and may increase the risk of bleeding during and after surgery. Aspirin is in several over-the-counter medications, for example: Anacin, Pepto-Bismol and Alka-Seltzer Cold. Ibuprofen is in medications such as Advil, Motrin and Pediaprofen. Naproxen sodium is found in Aleve. Some supplements and herbal medications such as omega 3, flaxseed oil, fish oil and ginkgo may also increase risk of bleeding. Check with your pharmacist or refer to information provided about the content of medications.



For pain or fever, you can take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or the pain medication prescribed by your doctor, **but not both**. Acetaminophen does not increase the risk of bleeding, but too much can be harmful to your body. Many prescription pain medicines including Norco, Vicodin, Percocet and Tylenol with codeine contain this ingredient. Be sure to check the contents of your prescription pain medications.

- If you have been prescribed a blood thinner by another physician for a health condition, be sure to speak to them about when to stop/restart these or an alternate plan.
- Make arrangements for your postoperative care. As you prepare for your procedure, we encourage you to identify a care plan partner to support you during your recovery. It is important to have someone to help you for at least the first 24 hours after your procedure.



You'll appreciate having a family member or friend help you at home after surgery to assist with routine activities like cooking, bathing and transportation. If you are unable to get assistance, please let us know.

- Smoking or using tobacco products can cause problems during and after your procedure. We want your recovery to be as smooth as possible, so please stop any of these now. If you need help stopping, please speak with your primary care doctor.

The Night Before Your Surgery

- **Don't eat or drink anything after midnight**

It's important to not eat or drink ANYTHING after midnight unless we have advised you otherwise. This is to prevent you from vomiting when you are put to sleep which could cause a problem in your lungs and elsewhere. You can take your usual medications with a sip of water unless your prescribing doctor(s) has told you otherwise. Nothing to eat includes mints, candy, cough drops and gum. Even a nibble can cancel surgery.

If your procedure is after noon, you may have plain liquids **up to 2 hours prior to arriving** for your procedure. This includes black coffee, chicken broth, Gatorade, apple juice and plain Jell-O (no fruit, etc. added in).

- **Driving after your procedure**

We don't want you to drive following your procedure, so please make arrangements for someone to drive you home after you have been discharged. You must also wait at least 24 hours after you have had anesthesia to resume driving.



Driving may resume as soon as you are no longer taking prescription (narcotic) pain medication, you are comfortable, have the ability to turn your head from side to side and are able to control your vehicle in the event of an emergency.

- **It's important to stay well hydrated after your procedure** so go ahead and stock up on items you will need. We recommend that you eat or drink whatever feels most comfortable after your procedure. In our experience, most find that clear fluids and soft foods are the most easily tolerated during the first 24 hours. Liquids such as water, apple juice and ginger ale are fine. Acidic liquids (orange juice, lemonade) can upset your stomach, especially if you are not eating a regular diet.



Did you know that drinking lots of fluids will help speed up your recovery and reduce your discomfort? It may feel difficult to swallow at first, but the more you drink and swallow, the less pain you will have.

Day of Surgery

- Someone from our office will call you a day in advance to advise you on when to arrive for your surgery. Bring reading material if you would like as your arrival time will be a couple of hours before your surgery.

Surgery date/time: _____

Things to bring with you to your procedure

- In addition to your medication list, bring any inhalers that you use, a case for eyeglasses or contacts, your insurance card and enough money for any copayments and/or prescriptions. If you have a social security card or number, bring either with you as well. DO NOT BRING your medicines (except inhalers), jewelry (a wedding ring is OK), credit cards or large amounts of money.
- **Showering/bathing** may be resumed immediately after the patient returns home following surgery. You have probably been looking forward to showering and/or bathing at home. It is okay to shower now or take a bath as long as the water is warm, not hot. Do not submerge your face under water at this time.
- It's common to have a low-grade fever during the first week of recovery. However, if you feel feverish and your temperature is 102F or greater (oral thermometers are the most accurate), let us know as soon as possible.



It's common to feel "down" a few days after a procedure. This may last for a few hours or a few days, and you may feel emotionally exhausted. Don't worry. This is a normal response and it will go away as you recover.

- Mild bleeding and/or blood-tinged nasal drainage may occur following your procedure. This is normal. You can be expected to have some bleeding from the nose that requires you to change your gauze mustache dressing 4-5 times the night following surgery.
- **DO NOT blow your nose** for two weeks after your procedure to help reduce bleeding. Also, there is a stitch that is holding the splints in place, and you can tear a hole in your septum. If you must cough or sneeze, try to do so through an open mouth.



If you are having excessive bleeding, you can spray three to four puffs of a nasal decongestant into the bleeding nostril, pinch your nostrils together, and put your chin to your chest. **If there is severe bleeding from nose or mouth or bleeding persists longer than a few minutes, you should seek immediate medical attention at the closest emergency room.**

24-72 Hours After Your Surgery

- Now that the procedure is behind you, let's focus on keeping you comfortable and work toward a strong recovery. You're probably feeling uncomfortable today, but it is important to get up and move around a bit (following our instructions) at least three times each day. Movement helps to prevent blood clots and preserve your muscle strength.



You may be aware that your nose and your upper gums/teeth are a bit numb or sore following your procedure. This is to be expected. It will generally improve in several weeks but can persist up to several months. If you experience any uncontrolled pain or complications from any medication prescribed by us, please let us know right away.

Pain management

- Many patients experience some discomfort around nose and face following sinus surgery which may affect how they eat, drink or sleep. There may also be some throat discomfort from the breathing tube used during anesthesia. The degree of pain will vary during recovery and can last up to 14 days following surgery. You will be prescribed pain medication that should be administered every 4-6 hours for the first few days after surgery. We then recommend you transition to Tylenol, using prescribed pain medication for breakthrough pain only.



Constipation and nausea are common side effects of narcotic pain medicine. Stool softeners, a high fiber diet, apple juice or prune juice and drinking plenty of water help prevent constipation. Taking your narcotic with food helps decrease nausea.

- To be more comfortable when lying down or sleeping, rest with your head elevated above the level of your heart. Sleep in a recliner or use several pillows under your upper back to prop your head up for the first 48-72 hours following your procedure.

- You can also begin icing. This will reduce swelling and improve your comfort. Filling the fingers of a disposable glove with crushed ice and loosely applying it to both sides of the nose for short periods of time works well. Reusable ice packs also work well.



Some patients may experience some dizziness, nausea and/or vomiting during the first 24-36 hours following surgery. Let us know if nausea or vomiting is experienced for more than 6-12 hours.

For Two Weeks after surgery

- Generally, it takes 5-10 days to recover after sinus surgery. However, some patients may feel better in just a few days and others may take up to two weeks to recover. You should take it easy for the first week after your procedure, gradually resuming normal activities. Do not engage in strenuous activities such as sports and exercise for at least two weeks. For six weeks following surgery, you should avoid activities that risk contact to the nose.



We do NOT recommend that you travel long distances the first two weeks, as this is when issues may arise. It makes sense for you to be able to get back to us quickly in case you have any problems following your procedure.

- You will need to use **over-the-counter nasal saline sprays** to keep the mucus linings of your nose and sinuses moist following your procedure. Use two squirts in each nostril every one to two hours while awake.
- **Do not lift anything over 20 pounds**, including a child, for the first two weeks following your procedure. The strain of lifting puts pressure on blood vessels in the process of healing, causing them to re-open and bleed.



If you have ANY change in vision, bruising around your eyes, a crackling feeling when you gently push around the eye socket or pain with ANY eye movement, let us know as soon as possible.

- You will be stuffy after the procedure and may have some facial pressure. This will improve once we remove your splints at your first post-operative appointment. For now, just continue with your saline spray for nasal congestion and crusting.



DO NOT blow your nose until you have seen your surgeon back for a post-operative visit and been given permission to blow your nose. There is a stitch in your nose that is holding the splints in place and you can tear a hole in your septum if you sneeze or blow your nose at this time.

- In addition to having congestion, you may also have more drainage (mucus) from your nose and down the back of your throat. This should also improve after splints are removed. If you are having allergic symptoms, you may use an antihistamine, but hold off on any nasal sprays other than saline at this time.
- **Rare but important symptoms:** it's important to be aware of symptoms that require urgent care. If you suddenly have trouble breathing, have pain while breathing deeply or start coughing blood, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Postoperative Appointment (Two weeks after surgery)

- We look forward to seeing how well your recovery is going since your procedure. Please don't forget your already scheduled follow-up appointment in our office. If you don't remember the date, please let us know 479-750-2080.

Follow-up appointment date/time: _____

- We will likely remove your splints at your first post-operative appointment a week after your procedure. Your breathing will improve at this point and should continue to improve over the next few weeks as the swelling resolves. You should continue your saline spray as directed.
- You will also likely be able to blow your nose after this appointment. We know it's been difficult so good job for making it this far. Vigorous nose blowing should be minimized for the next few weeks. You may have some mild bleeding after splints are removed. If so, pinch nostrils together and lean head forward. If bleeding is severe or persists, please seek medical attention at the closest emergency facility.
- Remember that you may resume driving once you are no longer taking prescription (narcotic) pain medication, you are comfortable, have the ability to turn your head from side to side and are able to control your vehicle in the event of an emergency. If you are taking narcotic pain medication, please make arrangements for someone to drive you to and from your appointment.

- Generally, you can return to work after seven days. If you work in a field around waste matter or dusty environments, you are advised to wear a mask to help prevent infections.



If you need to communicate with your Care Team directly during business hours, please call our main phone number 479-750-2080. If at any point you need urgent medical attention, please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.