



Han G. Sohn
MD, FACS

Post-operative Instructions Following Nasal Fracture Reduction

Early healing of the nose depends upon how well you take care of yourself after the procedure. Please review the following instructions before surgery and ask about anything that is not clear.

Swelling:

Everyone has some swelling after surgery. For some, the swelling is worse than others. It is important to sleep with your head elevated on several pillows at night. Cool compresses applied to the face and especially the eyes will help reduce the swelling more quickly. You should use the cool compresses for as much as possible for the first several days.

A good technique is to use a wash cloth dipped in a bucket of ice water. Then squeeze out the excess water and place it over the upper cheeks and cast. Avoid placing anything frozen directly on the skin.

Bruising:

Bruising is caused by small amounts of blood accumulated under the tissues during surgery. Most of it resolves completely by two to three weeks after surgery. Makeup can help hide the bruises after one week.

Bleeding:

Some bloody discharge from your nose is normal. Wear the folded gauze bandage (moustache dressing) below your nose for the first few days to catch any discharge. If the bloody discharge increases, you can spray some Afrin gently in your nose. Call the office immediately if the bleeding is brisk. If you cannot wait for a reply, go to your nearest Emergency Room. Please have the physician there contact your doctor immediately.

Cast:

If a cast has been placed, it will be removed between six to eight days after surgery. Replace it with tape if it falls off early.

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Diet:

You may have liquids by mouth once you have awakened from anesthesia. If you tolerate the liquids without significant nausea or vomiting then you may take solid foods but avoid foods that require a lot of chewing or wide mouth opening. If nausea is persistent, an anti-nausea medication may be prescribed for you. Some patients experience a mild sore throat for 2-3 days following the procedure. This usually does not interfere with swallowing.

Pain control:

Patients report mild nasal pain, congestion and headache for a few to several days following nasal fracture surgery. This is usually well controlled with prescription strength oral pain medications (e.g. Vicodin, Tylenol #3). Please take the pain medication prescribed by your surgeon when needed. You should avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen (Excedrin, Motrin, Naprosyn, Advil) because these drugs are mild blood thinners and will increase your chances of having a post-operative nose bleed. Please contact our office if your pain is not controlled with your prescription pain medication.

Activity:

No bending, heavy lifting (over 10lbs), or straining for 2 weeks following the surgery. You should plan for 1 week away from work. If your job requires manual labor, lifting or straining then you should be out of work for 2 weeks or limited to light duty until the 2 week mark.

Do not blow your nose for 14 days after surgery. If you have to sneeze, do so with your mouth open. Walking and other light activities are encouraged after the first 24 hours. You may resume light aerobic exercise 2 weeks after surgery and full workout including weight training 3-4 weeks after surgery.

Bathing and showering:

As soon as you feel well enough, but keep the cast dry for 6 or 7 days until the morning of your appointment. That morning get the cast wet when you shower. This will make it easier to remove your cast in the office.

Be careful not to bump your nose:

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Beware of restless/playful children, bedmates and pets. Avoid putting any pressure on your nose when you sleep.

Activities

You may drive as soon as the swelling allows for clear vision and you are no longer taking sedating pain medications. You may fly at two to three weeks. Please stay out of the sun and use SPF 30 or higher for at least 6 months. Wear a baseball cap to help protect the nose from sun exposure and trauma. Do not smoke for at least 3 weeks before and after surgery. Smoking will increase swelling and delay healing.

Nasal care following the surgery:

Hot steam showers as needed are very helpful in relieving nasal congestion and crusting. Try to keep the nasal cast dry. Hair can be washed with the head tilted back in the shower or over the sink. Sleep with the head elevated for the first two weeks; this will minimize pain and congestion. You may use two pillows to do this or sleep in a reclining chair. The doctor may have you spray your nose with decongestant spray (Afrin or neosynepherine) as needed for persistent nasal congestion and oozing. Do not wear eyeglasses after the cast comes off for 6 weeks after surgery due to the incisions in the bones of your nasal bridge. If you must wear eyeglasses, ask us about methods to support them off your nose.

Medical Supplements/Medications: Take pain medication as prescribed.

Follow-up appointments: Your follow up appointment in the office will be 1 week after your surgery. If you do not have these appointment made, please contact our office.

Please call our office immediately if you experience:

- Brisk nose bleeding
- Fever greater than 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit
- Purulent discharge (pus) coming from the nose
- Severe nasal pain or headache

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