

# Septoplasty With Turbinate Reduction: Instructions For your Procedure

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## What is a septoplasty with turbinate reduction?

A procedure done to straighten or repair a deviated **septum** and reduce enlarged **turbinates**.

**Septum**- is the cartilage and bone in your nose. The septum divides the nasal cavity (inside your nose) into a right and left side. When the septum is off-center or leans to one side of the nasal cavity, it is “deviated.”

**Turbinates** are bony structures inside the nose, covered by soft tissue (mucosa). They regulate airflow and warm and humidify the air you inhale. Enlarged turbinates reduce air flow.

## What supplies do I need to buy before the procedure?

- Gauze Pads
- Skin tape
- Saline Nasal Spray
- Afrin® Nasal Spray
- Neil Med® Sinus Rinse (per surgeon’s instructions)

## How should I prepare for surgery?

- Stop smoking cigarettes, using chewing tobacco, and vaping 4 weeks before surgery; preferably stop altogether.
- Stop Marijuana in any form 1 week before surgery; preferably stop altogether.
- Stop Afrin® Nasal (generic name Oxymetazoline HCL) sprays **4 weeks** before

surgery.

- No alcohol 24 hours before surgery.
- Try to stay in good health. Make sure you are eating and sleeping well. Walk daily when possible.

## **What are my post-operative instructions?**

### **General rules**

- Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for the first day.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Follow a balanced healthy diet and increase fluids.
- No exercising (except walking) for 1 week.
- Lack of exercise may lead to constipation. Add extra fluids and high fiber foods into your diet. For more information, read this handout: [www.med.umich.edu/1libr/Surgery/GenSurgery/HighFiberDiet](http://www.med.umich.edu/1libr/Surgery/GenSurgery/HighFiberDiet)
- Consume extra protein for healing. Open this link for suggestions: <http://www.med.umich.edu/1libr/nutrition/IncreasingProtein>
- Take pain medication as prescribed. Not all cases require narcotic (opioid) pain medications, please talk this over with your surgeon. Read this handout for guidance on managing pain without opioids: <http://www.med.umich.edu/1libr/Surgery/MPOPEducation-ManagingPainWithoutOpioids.pdf>

### **Aspirin or Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory (NSAIDs) medications:**

- Avoid aspirin, NSAIDs (such as Motrin, Aleve, Naprosyn), and other blood thinners for 1 week unless approved by your doctor. These medications may cause bleeding.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medication, antibiotics, or steroids until you complete the course(s) of medication(s).
- Even when not taking pain medications, avoid alcohol for 2 weeks after

surgery as it causes fluid to build-up in your body.

- Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

### **What should my activity level be?**

- Start walking as soon as possible. Walking has the following benefits:
  - Reduces swelling
  - Lowers the chance of blood clots or pneumonia
  - Lowers the risk of constipation
- Do not drive until 24 hours after you are no longer taking any prescribed pain medications (narcotics/opioids).
- Avoid travel by airplane 5 days after surgery (or until cleared by your doctor).
- Avoid the following for **1 week** after surgery:
  - Lifting heavy objects (over 10 pounds)
  - Bending at the waist
- Avoid any physical exercise that can cause overheating for **2 weeks**
- Avoid Swimming for **1 month**
- Avoid the following for **2 months** after surgery:
  - Diving
  - Body contact sports
  - Hitting or rubbing your nose
  - Sunburn

### **How do I care for my nasal packing?**

- Packing: Your nose *may be* packed after nasal surgery. Typically, this is removed the day after surgery in the office. Some intranasal splints can be left in for 7 days; your surgeon will notify you if this was required.
- Most individuals return to work within a week following surgery. Some return earlier, some later. Plan to be out for a week, but you may return

earlier if you feel ready and off prescription pain meds.

- Keep your head elevated with 2-3 pillows while sleeping for the first 2 nights after surgery. You may want to sleep in a recliner. If you have packing it will be very difficult and uncomfortable to lie flat with the packing in place.
- Use ice packs the first 48-72 hours after surgery to decrease swelling.
- Change the gauze underneath your nose as needed. Bleeding should decrease over the first 24 hours. Old dark blood may drain for 2 weeks after surgery.
  - If you need to change the nasal dressing more than once every 10-15 minutes, spray Afrin® (generic name: Oxymetazoline HCL 0.05%) into both nostrils and relax.
  - If the bleeding continues for 5 minutes, you are seeing blood clots, or you begin to swallow blood, please contact our office Monday-Friday 9am-5pm at: (734) 936-8051.
    - During afterhours and weekends please call the ENT on-call doctor at (734) 936-6267.
  - For very severe bleeding, call 911 or go to your local emergency department.
- When showering, please only use warm water, super-hot temperatures increase blood flow. **NO** hot tubs.

You may be advised to do *either* saline irrigation or saline spray (at the discretion of your surgeon):

**Saline irrigation (Sinus Rinse Bottle or Neti Pot)**

- Follow the instructions on the product regarding mixing and irrigating. Begin using saline irrigations on the [per surgeon] day after surgery.
- Use the irrigations [per surgeon] times per day.
- You will get blood, clots, and possibly packing material out when you irrigate. If you would like to make your own saline solution at home, please follow the saline recipe, below.
  - Saline recipe:

- ½ - teaspoon non-iodized salt (pickling salt)
- ¼ - teaspoon baking soda
- 1 - cup distilled water or tap water that has been boiled and brought back to room temperature

**Saline spray (Ocean Spray, Ayr nasal spray)**

- Use the saline spray every 1-2 hours while you are awake.
- Do not blow your nose for 2 weeks, blot instead.
- If you have intranasal splints, then after 7 days when your nasal splints are removed, you may gently blow your nose.
- When you sneeze or cough, open your mouth to avoid pressure through the nose for 2 weeks.
- Try to eat a light, soft meal as tolerated for your first meal, and avoid gas stimulating foods.

**How should I expect to feel?**

- After surgery, particularly during the first 24 hours, your face will feel puffy.
- Moderate bleeding from the nose is normal and may last for several days, up to 2 weeks.
- Expect to feel minimal to moderate pain. Your nose may ache and you may have a dull headache.
- Healing is a slow and gradual process, some numbness may be present around the operative areas. You will have nasal congestion and discharge for the first few weeks after surgery. Your nasal passage and breathing should return to normal again 2-3 weeks after surgery.
- You may experience some discomfort with breathing, a common complaint is that the fullness flips from side to side on a given day. Swollen nasal tissues may cause the nose to seem “stuffed up” for several weeks.
- Please check with your surgeon when you can re-start using your C-PAP.

## **When should I call my doctor?**

### **Call you doctor if you notice any of the symptoms below:**

- Oral temperature over 101 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Severe or increased pain not relieved by medication when taken as directed.
- Any side effects to medications including; rash, nausea, headache, vomiting, diarrhea.
- Yellowish or greenish liquid from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- Bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure. Or nosebleed not stopping with pressure and Afrin use.
- Loss of feeling or motion of the face.

**In the event of life-threatening bleeding, you should call 911 or go to the emergency department.**

## **What is the contact information?**

- Monday - Friday, 9:00am - 5:00pm:
  - Call: (734) 936-8051
- After hours and on weekends:
  - Call Hospital Paging at (734) 936-6267 and ask for the ENT Doctor on call.

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