

Sinus Surgery (FESS) - Post Operative Instructions

Surgery

Endoscopic sinus surgery (with or without septoplasty and turbinate reduction) involves general anesthesia, typically for 1 to 2 hours. Patients may be sedated for several hours after surgery and may remain sleepy for the better part of the day. You may have nausea or vomiting, but it usually goes away by the evening of surgery without additional medication. Most patients can go home the day of surgery.

After Surgery

- Facial pressure and fullness similar to a sinus infection/headache is normal after surgery. Breathing through your nose is also difficult due to swelling. A humidifier or vaporizer can be used in your bedroom to prevent throat pain during mouth breathing
- Bloody nasal drainage is normal after surgery for 5-7 days, usually decreasing with each day. Drainage will flow from the front of the nose and down the back of the throat. Make sure you spit out blood drainage that drips down the back of your throat to prevent nausea/vomiting. You will have a nasal drip pad/sling with gauze to catch drainage from the front of your nose
- The dressing may need to be changed frequently during the first 24 hours following surgery. If you have a lot of nasal bleeding, you may apply ice to the bridge of the nose and pinch the nose just above the tip and hold for 10 minutes. If bleeding continues, contact the doctor's office
- Frequent hot showers or saline nasal rinses (NeilMed) will help break up congestion and clear any clot or mucus that builds up within the nose after surgery. This can be started the day after surgery
- It is more comfortable to sleep with extra pillows or in a recliner for the first few days after surgery until the drainage begins to go away
- Do not blow your nose for 2 weeks after surgery
- Avoid lifting more than 10 pounds and no vigorous exercise for 2 weeks after surgery
- Avoid airplane travel for 2 weeks following sinus surgery; the cabin pressure changes can cause pain and swelling within the nose/sinuses
- Sense of smell and taste are often affected for several weeks after surgery. There may be some tenderness or numbness in your upper front teeth, which is normal after surgery. You may have clots, discolored mucus or very large nasal crusts discharge from your nose for up to 3 to 4 weeks after surgery. Depending on how frequently and how effectively you irrigate your nose with the saltwater spray
- You may have absorbable sutures inside of your nose after surgery that will slowly dissolve in 2-3 weeks. Be careful when clearing crusts from the nose since they may be attached to these sutures

Medication

Pain medication can be used as prescribed. Pain and pressure in the nose is expected after surgery. As the surgical site heals, pain will go away over the course of a week. Pain medications can cause nausea, which can be prevented if you take them with food or milk.

You may be given an antibiotic for one week after surgery to prevent infection. Take this medication with food to prevent nausea or vomiting.

You can use 2 nasal sprays after surgery: Afrin can be used up to 2 times a day for up to 5 days after surgery (best before bed) to reduce bloody drainage from the nose for the first few days after surgery. Saline/salt water spray can be used once the nasal splints are removed to prevent crusting inside of the nose.

Take all of your routine medications as prescribed, unless told otherwise by your surgeon. Any medications that thin the blood should be avoided. These include aspirin and aspirin-like products (Advil, Motrin, Excedrin, Aleve, Celebrex, Naprosyn).