



**Otolaryngology
Specialists
of North Texas**

Pediatric and Adult Ear, Nose, & Throat Specialists

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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS SINUS SURGERY

Recovery: Recovery from anesthesia usually occurs over several hours. Following the surgery, the patient is transported to the recovery room where they are observed for approximately 1-2 hours. They are then transferred to the day surgery unit where they are allowed to visit with their family and friends, have something to drink and eat, get out of bed, and go to the restroom. Once the patient has fulfilled all of the criteria required by the surgeon and the day surgery staff, they are allowed to return home. We require that a family member or friend transport the patient home. We typically ask patients to budget about one week off of work following the procedure, but most patients are able to return sooner. We would ask that the patient to not return to work if they are taking narcotic pain medication, or if the nose is oozing blood.

Diet: The patient is typically given clear liquids in the day surgery unit after being transferred from the recovery room. The patient can then advance to a regular diet over the following day or two, depending upon whether nausea is present or not.

Activity:

We typically have the patient maintain head elevation while in bed during the first week. This reduces swelling, oozing, and discomfort. We suggest no heavy lifting or vigorous activity during the first week. We would request that the patient not travel out of the DFW area during the first 2 weeks.

Instructions/expectations:

pain: The pain following sinus surgery is typically mild to moderate and generally feels like a sinus infection, with distribution across the cheeks, upper teeth, around the eyes, or in the forehead. Narcotic pain meds are prescribed, and are usually taken by the patient during the first few days. At any point, the patient may transition to Tylenol for the pain as it becomes milder. We request that the patient avoid NSAIDs, such as Motrin, ibuprofen, Advil, aspirin, or Aleve. It is not uncommon to have some throat pain after sinus surgery due to the breathing tube which is in place during the operation. This typically lasts several days.

nausea: Nausea is occasionally present after a general anesthesia. If present in the hospital, the nursing staff can administer anti-nausea medications. If present after discharge, anti-nausea medications can be called in by your surgeon, or their office staff.

fever: Fever is not expected after nasal surgery. If a fever over 100 is present, please call the physician.

swelling: Typically, there is only mild swelling of the lower nose or nostrils. Bruising around the eyes is not typical, unless the patient had a cosmetic rhinoplasty performed along with the sinus operation. If the skin of the nostrils is irritated, an over-the-counter antibiotic ointment will help.

oozing: All patients will have some oozing of blood from the nose after a sinus surgery. This typically occurs during the first few days after the procedure. Most patients will ooze a minor amount, but some can bleed more significantly. If you are having hemorrhage from the nose, we would request that you contact your surgeon for further instructions. We

would request that the patient wear a drip pad under the nostrils when the nose is oozing. The nursing staff at the surgery facility will teach you about placement of the drip pad.

splints: In cases where repair of a deviated septum is performed in concert with sinus surgery, the surgeon will often insert splints into the nose to keep the septum straight as the healing occurs during the first week. While the splints are in place the patient will feel that there is something in the nose, and will experience some nasal congestion. Since the splints are synthetic, the patient's congestion does not typically respond to decongestants, nasal steroids, or antihistamines. The splints are typically removed one week after surgery, and this process is usually not painful for the patient.

saline: We usually ask patients to start saline nasal spray the day of the surgery. This is to be administered gently into both nostrils over the sink. Saline is important to promote healing, remove old clotted blood, and to keep the nasal passages open. We usually ask the patient to administer saline as often as they can while awake, a minimum of 4-5 times a day.

Medications: Pain medication(s) as per your surgeon's instructions. Commonly used medications include acetaminophen or prescription acetaminophen/hydrocodone. Your surgeon will prescribe antibiotic.

Follow-up appointment: Typically one week after surgery. Call the office to confirm appointment.