

Breckenridge Surgery Center

Rhinoplasty Post-op Care Instructions

1. Keep Head elevated as much as possible first 48 hours.
2. Ice packs on the nose and eyes the first 48 hours can be helpful, but do not put weight on the nasal splint.
3. Change drip pad as needed first 24-48 hours (drops of blood every hour are common, soaking a shirt or towel in less than an hour is not common and please call the physician for excessive bleeding).
4. The nasal splint needs to be kept dry and clean: if it gets wet, it may come off too soon. Showering from the neck down only is recommended. Use a washcloth for the face. For washing hair, we recommend getting assistance from a family member or friend with the head held over a sink or a bath tub.
5. Avoid blowing the nose until the splint comes off. Sneezing is unavoidable and normally will not have any adverse impact on the results. However, do not blow hard or grab the nose forcibly.
6. Expect nasal stuffiness from the swollen nasal lining (the mucosa): it is common to not be able to breath through the nose for 2-3 weeks. Do not try to blow out the nose or dislodge material in the nose, although there will be some dried blood in the nose, the blood is not normally the cause of obstruction: the swollen tissue is causing the obstruction and one must be patient until this resolves.
7. Starting three days after surgery, the nostril entrance can be cleaned with a q-tip with peroxide and inserted into the nostril only 5mm (1/4 of an inch).
8. Once the splint comes off (approximately 7-10 days) the internal aspect of the nose can be rinsed out with saline spray (nettipot or nasal allergy irrigation) 1-2 times per day. This needs to be done very gently. Make sure sterile saline is used.
9. Expect bruising around the eyes if the nose had to be broken (nasal osteotomies). This is most commonly unavoidable. The bruising can take 10-14 days to resolve.
10. Make sure to have a follow up appointment 5-6 days post-op. If you do not have one, call the office for an appointment.
11. Complete resolution of the internal swelling of the nose will take at least 6 weeks. So expect difficulty breathing through the nose for that long. Most of the nasal sprays that "open up the nose" interfere with healing: so avoid all nasal decongestant and allergy sprays except sterile saline for the first 6 weeks.
12. The outside of the nose and especially the nasal tip can stay swollen for up to a year, especially after an open rhinoplasty. Be patient with the swelling.
13. Gently touching the nose after the splint is removed is fine. However avoid any trauma or blows to the nose for 6 weeks (to avoid injuring the newly positioned bones and cartilage). Aerobic exercise can be undertaken 72 hours post-op, but sports with a risk of injury (basketball, soccer) should wait a minimum of 6 weeks.