

Statesboro ENT & Sinus Center, LLC

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Post-operative instructions for septoplasty / functional nasal surgery:

What to expect:

- ❑ Following surgery, your nose will most likely be packed to control bleeding and maintain positioning of the septum and inferior turbinates (lower sidewall bones). *Do not expect to be breathing through your nose!* (Not yet!)
- ❑ You will have a dressing below your nose to catch any drainage. If it is soaked, then replace a clean one. This will probably need to be done several times overnight.
- ❑ Because you will be breathing through your mouth, a bed or chair-side humidifier (“cool-mist”) will be helpful.
- ❑ Although there should be no swelling or bruising of the nose or face, the packs can be uncomfortable (*I know from personal experience!*). Take the prescribed pain medicine or Tylenol as necessary, but avoid blood-thinning medicines, such as ibuprofen or aspirin.
- ❑ The packs will be removed the following morning, most likely in the office. The facial pressure should quickly resolve, but do not expect the nasal airway to be clear, since there will still be clot, ointment, crusts, and splints to be removed the following week. (*Hint: Take a pain pill 30 minutes prior to your appointment to remove the packs – it will bring a tear to your eyes!*)

What to do:

- ❑ For the first night, just *take it easy!* You will likely be most comfortable sleeping in a recliner or propped up on a few pillows. This will help with any swelling too.
- ❑ As stated above, I strongly recommend having a humidifier running.
- ❑ Ice across the nose should not be necessary unless other procedures were performed. You will be given clear instructions if this is recommended.
- ❑ Once the packs are removed the next morning, it will be important not to do any nose blowing, straining, or heavy lifting (~30 lbs.) for the next 2 weeks. You can resume all other activities, including going back to work, typically within a few days. Note: Light duty is recommended at work if strenuous activity required!
- ❑ Saline Spray (i.e. *Simply Saline*) needs to be sprayed in the nose **at least every hour while awake**. Using the spray is a major difference between those who heal well and those who don’t. Dry crusts/clots in the nose create risk for scarring. Gently irrigate and catch the drainage, but don’t blow!
- ❑ To control any oozing of blood, topical decongestant spray (such as *Afrin* or *Neo-Synephrine*) should be used twice daily for the **first 4 days only**.

That’s really all there is to it! Nearly everyone is amazed, not just by how well they breathe, but also by how little pain is involved! There will be thin, internal nasal splints removed one week after surgery, and your nose will be cleaned at that time.

If you have any questions or problems, feel free to contact us at (912) 681-7368.