

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SINUS SURGERY

NASAL DRAINAGE

Following surgery, you will have drainage from your nose. At first, there may be a small amount of bright red blood. This is normal and may continue for the first week. A gauze dressing will be placed on your upper lip to absorb the drainage. You may need to change the dressing several times on the day of your surgery. Old blood which collected during surgery will drain a dark reddish brown for a week or more. Later the drainage may change to a thicker yellow green color. This is also normal after sinus surgery and is not a sign of infection. Any bleeding that lasts more than 10 minutes or is heavy should be reported to your doctor immediately.

NASAL CONGESTION

You might have nasal packing after surgery. If you do, you will need to return in 24-48 hours to have it removed by your doctor. For the first week after surgery, your head will feel stuffy. There will be swelling of the mucous membranes that will sometimes persist for several weeks after the operation. The swelling will go away with time and you will be able to breathe out of your nose more easily.

DISCOMFORT AFTER SURGERY

Most people describe their discomfort after surgery as a dull ache or pressure feeling, but it varies from person to person. Take the pain medicine as prescribed. If your pain is lessening, you can switch to plain Tylenol. Do not take aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen or other aspirin-like-product for 23 weeks after surgery. Remember that some over the counter drugs may contain these drugs and you might not know it. If there is a question, ask your pharmacist.

WEAKNESS AND TIREDNESS

You may notice that you feel more weak and tired after this operation, or you may find it hard to concentrate. Remember that even though you may not have any external incision, you still have had an operation. This should improve after 7-10 days of recuperation.

SUGGESTIONS FOR COMFORT

- Sleep with head elevated on 2-3 pillows
- Protect your nose from being hit
- Use a cool mist humidifier to moisten crusts
- Use saline spray every 1-2 hours to prevent crusts

MEDICINES

You will be given an antibiotic and a pain medication prescription to prevent infection and pain. Take them as directed. Be sure to take all the antibiotic pills. Hold on using your nasal steroid sprays until 3 weeks after the operation or until your doctor tells you to resume it. Hold antihistamines for one week.

POSTOPERATIVE APPOINTMENTS

During the postoperative period, crusting can form from dried secretions and old blood. If not cleaned out, these crusts can set up scar formation and can close off the surgically opened sinuses. For this reason, it is imperative to keep all of your appointments after surgery to clean out these crusts. To allow for complete cleaning, we suggest taking your pain medication one hour before your first and second appointment. Make sure you have someone else drive if you have taken the pain medication.



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PRECAUTIONS AFTER SURGERY

Activity: For several weeks after your surgery, your body needs additional rest for healing. You should do no heavy lifting of objects greater than 5 lb. (a full gallon milk jug) for 2-3 weeks. Avoid bending over or straining. This can place pressure at the operative site and may cause bleeding. If you are constipated, take a stool softener or gentle laxative. Most people will return to work or school in 1-2 weeks after surgery. Refrain from sexual activity for the first 72 hours. Physical activity can be resumed after 2-3 weeks at a gradual rate. Avoid driving while on pain medication and avoid flying for 3-4 weeks after surgery.

DIET: You may keep a normal healthy diet.

SNEEZING: If you have to sneeze, do so with your mouth open to avoid pressure, discomfort and/or bleeding.

NOSE BLOWING: Do not blow your nose. This can provoke bleeding. You can gently sniff back your secretions. After 2-3 weeks, you can gently blow your nose, unless specifically instructed not to do so.

IRRITANTS: Avoid smoke, dust, fumes or anything else that may irritate your nose. Also keep away from things that may provoke your allergies.

Notify your Doctor if you have:

*Any bright red bleeding that lasts longer than 10 minutes or is heavy.

*Any vision problems like double vision, loss of vision, or bulging of the eye.

*Neck stiffness along with fever, tiredness and severe headaches.

*Fever greater than 101 which continues even after Tylenol.

*Persistent sharp pain not relieved by the prescribed pain medicine.

*Increase in swelling or redness.

*Drainage of thin clear watery fluid from the nose in large quantities that is different from the normal clear thicker mucous drainage.



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