

## Sinus Surgery Post-Operative Instructions

### General

- It is common to feel tired after general anesthesia and sinus surgery for up to 10 days post-operatively. DO NOT overdo it, increase your activity level gradually.
- Slight bleeding is expected after surgery and can last up to 10 days. Brisk bleeding that does not stop should be reported to your doctor. It is normal to experience dark red, bloody mucus.
- Post-operative irrigations work by cleaning your nose of clots and debris. You will start these the day after surgery.
- Clear drainage several hours after irrigations is common and will typically come out at the worst possible moments. Clear drainage that does not stop after surgery should be reported to your doctor.
- Low grade temperatures are common after general anesthesia; however, if your temperature is greater than 101.5°, report this to your doctor. Check your temperature daily for 7 days after surgery. If you are experiencing confusion or any mental status changes, please report these to your doctor.
- Patients routinely experience pain and pressure between, below or above the eyes.
- For patients who have also had a septoplasty, stents used in the nose make it difficult to breathe until they are removed at the first post-operative visit.
- If you feel it is difficult to get air through your nose after surgery, Afrin (oxymetazoline) or Neosynephrine nasal spray can be used at night for up to 3 consecutive days.  
These medications are addictive and must be discontinued after 3 days.

### Medications

- Your doctor will prescribe strong pain medications (narcotics) for pain control after surgery. Some patients have very little pain after surgery and do not require the narcotics. To wean off the narcotics, slowly substitute Tylenol for pain relief. Avoid aspirin, ibuprofen and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory pain relievers for 2 weeks after surgery.
- Anti-nausea medication will be prescribed to be used only AS NEEDED.

### Activity and Restrictions

- Increase your activity gradually over the next two weeks.
- Running errands or light work is allowed.
- Very gentle nose blowing is allowed and sneeze with your mouth open.
- You do not need to wear a mask during the recovery period.
- No heavy lifting greater than 20 lbs. for the next 2 weeks.
- No aerobic exercise until after the completion of the first postoperative visit.
- No swimming or chlorine pool exposure until 2 weeks after surgery.
- No driving or operating machinery while on narcotics.

- No flying for 2 weeks.

## **Salt Water Rinse for the Nose/Sinus**

Irrigations will prevent scar tissue from forming and decreases the amount of discomfort with the first post-operative debridement. It is normal to have large clots come out of the nose.

- **DISTILLED, BOTTLED OR BOILED** water is preferred; **DO NOT USE TAP WATER.**
- **Sea, canning, pickling, or kosher** salt is preferred. This can be found at the grocery store. **Do not use iodized table salt.** Arm & Hammer standard baking soda is acceptable.

You will be provided with a 60cc irrigating syringe to use during the post-operative period.

### Irrigation Recipe

Mix 8 teaspoons of salt and 4 teaspoons of baking soda in a gallon of water. If you experience burning with this concentration, decrease the amount of salt to 4 teaspoons per gallon of water.

### Irrigation Instructions

1. Use the irrigation over the sink or in the shower (head down and mouth open) by gently placing it in the nose and using a strong spray in the nose. Some patients prefer to warm the solution to body temperature in the microwave prior to use. Do not overheat.
2. Try to avoid swallowing the salt-water rinse.
3. Use 4 syringe-fuls (8 ounces) per side three times daily. This is the minimum. You cannot over irrigate.
4. Irrigations three times daily are required for the first 4 weeks after surgery, then once daily for another 4 weeks.

### Post-Operative Visits

- In order to obtain a satisfactory result, post-operative visits are essential. If scar tissue begins to form, this can be dealt with at your routine post-operative visits.
- Your first post-operative visit will be between 6 and 12 days after surgery. At that office visit small, soft sponge spacers will be removed from the nose along with old clots and debris. If you have not been scheduled for this visit, please call the office at (614) 771-9871.
- The second post-operative visit is 2 weeks after the surgery. This visit may also require cleaning.
- The next visit is typically 6-8 weeks after surgery.
- Depending on the type of sinus disease, some patients require visits 3 to 4 times per year.

### Recovery Period and Healing

- We routinely recommend 7 to 14 days off work and our office will assist with any paperwork you need for your employer.

**IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING AN AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY, CALL OR TEXT THE EMERGENCY LINE AT (614) 602-1472. YOU CAN LEAVE A MESSAGE AND YOUR CALL WILL BE RETURNED PROMPTLY.**