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F A C I A L P L A S T I C S

Postoperative Instructions:

Rhinoplasty

Uncomplicated and early healing depends greatly on how well you care for yourself after surgery. Please read the following instructions carefully before your surgery and ask us any questions you may have.

Introduction

The following is a list of general instructions for your care following surgery. Please read them carefully several times as most of your questions should be answered here. Instructions for your care will also be reviewed the morning after surgery. Carefully following these instructions should help you get the best results from your surgery.

After Surgery

Following your surgery, you must have another adult stay with you the first night. You should plan on remaining within thirty miles from the location of your surgery for this first night. It is also important for you to **keep your head elevated the evening after surgery as well as for the first two weeks following surgery.** This can be done by sleeping in a recliner tilted at 45 degrees. This is the preferred method for recovery and tends to be the most comfortable. If there is absolutely no way to have a recliner available to you after surgery, then sleeping with pillows propped up behind you in bed is a second option. This will help reduce facial swelling. Avoid rolling onto your face. Sleeping with an airplane pillow around your neck will help keep you from rolling onto your face at night.

Ice packs can be applied across the eyes for the first 48 hours after surgery. It is very important to make sure you are not getting the cast wet. This needs to stay dry at all times. Only apply the ice packs to the eyes.

Daily Care

This care will be reviewed the morning following your surgery:

1. Gently go over suture lines twice daily with hydrogen peroxide diluted with water (50% hydrogen peroxide & 50% water) on a Q-tip. After this, again with a Q-tip apply a liberal amount of A&D ointment. The stitches inside the nose are dissolvable and keeping them lubricated helps quicken the process.
2. You may shower the second day following surgery, but it is important to keep the tape and splint on your nose **dry at all times**. Baths are a better choice for most people. Just be cautious that the warm water may make you feel lightheaded so be sure to have someone assist you. You may only use a gentle shampoo such as Johnsons Baby Shampoo.
3. Be sure to report immediately any signs of bleeding that persist for more than ten minutes, infection, redness, fever, unusual drainage, or pain.
4. Stitches, if present, will be removed the seventh day after surgery.
5. Following removal of the tape and splint, you will need to **gently** wash your nose twice a day to help reduce oiliness.

What to expect

Swelling

Swelling will vary patient-to-patient. Swelling may actually increase the first three to four days before subsiding. When your splint is removed at the one-week point, your nose may appear fat and turned up too much- this is to be expected. Most of your swelling should resolve over the first two to three weeks. Do expect, however, to have minor fluctuations in the remaining swelling over the course of the next two to three months. Things to do to minimize this swelling include keeping your head elevated as much as possible over the first two to three weeks, avoiding bending over or heavy lifting for the first three weeks, and avoiding prolonged sun exposure for the first two to three months.

Discoloration

Bruising will vary like swelling from person to person. Most bruising and discoloration should resolve over the first two weeks. Make-up, **with Dr. Pennington's permission**, can be applied ten days to two weeks after surgery.

Numbness

Your nose will be numb following surgery. This is normal and will subside over the coming weeks to months. Unusual sensations, pins and needles, and occasionally mild discomfort may occur as these nerves regenerate over time.

Bleeding

If bleeding does occur, lie down with your head elevated. Try to relax. You may take a pain pill or a Valium. Place cool compresses over your eyes just as you did after surgery. You may apply light

pressure on the side of each of your nose. Wait 15 minutes. **If bleeding persists at this point, please contact Dr. Pennington.**

Depression

It is not uncommon for patients to go through a period of mild depression after cosmetic surgery. This typically occurs the second week after surgery while some of the swelling and bruising still persist and yet the patient is anxious to see a final result. Realize this is a temporary condition and things will improve. Focus on diligently following the wound care as well as other activities to help divert your mind.

Eye Glasses

Eyeglasses may be worn with the splint in place. Once the splint is removed, they should be either suspended from the forehead or supported on the cheek for a period of six weeks. **This is critical- pressure on the nose may change its final shape.** Contact lenses may be inserted the week after surgery.

Restrictions

1. No strenuous exercise for at least four weeks.
2. No heavy lifting for three weeks.
3. No pull-over clothing for two weeks.
4. Avoid hard chewing foods for two weeks.
5. Avoid yawning or wide mouth opening for two weeks.
6. Avoid nose blowing or wiping of the nose for two weeks.
7. Use a baby toothbrush on the upper teeth for two weeks following surgery.
8. If sneezing, sneeze with the mouth open for two weeks.
9. No driving for one, preferably two weeks after surgery.
10. No contact sports for six weeks.

The healing time for nasal surgery is often more than expected and the results are worth the wait. While swelling should be completely gone after four to six weeks, your healing will continue for the entire first year. I will follow you through this entire process but be patient.

Please do not hesitate to ever contact our office. (318-216-5366)