



Lindsey Pennington, MD  
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, please let Dr. Pennington and her staff know so other accommodations can be made. 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 always stay dry.** Only apply the ice packs to the eyes.

#### General

- Change the nasal drip pad as needed. Some bleeding and mucous is normally expected out the front of the nose or draining down the back of the throat.

- Numbness in the cheek, lips, nose, and teeth is common. Nasal congestion & facial pressure is common.
- No smoking for 4 weeks post-surgery and no alcohol 2 weeks post-surgery
- No aspirin, ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil, or similar anti-inflammatory medication. Dr. Pennington will advise you when you may resume taking these medications.
  - Other blood thinners, such as Coumadin or Plavix, must also be discontinued, under the guidance of your primary care physician.
- No herbal medications, supplements, or teas.
  - Increased risk of bleeding includes, but are not limited to Vitamin E, garlic, ginger, ginkgo, ginseng, kava, and St. John's Wort, fish oil, and green tea
  - Arnica Montana herbal *tablet* may help reduce bruising and swelling

### Diet

- Advance slowly from liquids to soft, then solid foods after anesthesia. No restrictions on specific type of food or drink.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- **Do not chew gum.**
- **LOW SALT DIET!!!** Even the smallest amount of salt can greatly increase swelling and slow the healing process down dramatically. (less than 2,000mg per day)
- Eat high fat, high protein meals, **avoid things like JELL-O (no nutritional value)**

### Activity

- **Sleep with your head elevated at a 45-degree angle in a recliner for the first 1-2 weeks**, to help reduce nasal swelling.
- **Do NOT** rub your nose or put any pressure on the nose.
- **Do NOT blow nose. You may, however, sniff into the nose.**
- Avoid sneezing. If unable to avoid sneezing, then sneeze with your mouth open.
- **Do NOT** bend over or hang your head down.
- **No** cardio, straining, strenuous activity, or sex for at least 4 weeks.
- **No** contact sports or heavy lifting (anything over 8 lbs) for 6 weeks.
- **No** gum chewing until cleared by Dr. Pennington.
- **No shower or face washing until cleared by Dr. Pennington**
- **No hair styling or products until cleared by Dr. Pennington**
- **No makeup until cleared by Dr. Pennington**

### 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 distilled water (50% hydrogen peroxide & 50% distilled 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 not shower until instructed by Dr. Pennington. 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. Dr. Pennington will instruct you on when it is okay to take first bath or shower.
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.

### What to expect

#### *Swelling*

Swelling will vary patient-to-patient. Swelling may 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 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.

### *Eyeglasses*

Eyeglasses should NOT be worn until directed by Dr. Pennington. Please see the website below for a headband that holds glasses off the nose. **This is critical- pressure on the nose may change its final shape.** Contact lenses may be inserted when Dr. Pennington advises.

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)

[https://www.amazon.com/Optics-Pro-Nose-Guard-Eyeglass-Suspension/dp/B01N3T4L21/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=glasses+holder+for+after+nose+surgery&qid=1582819075&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Optics-Pro-Nose-Guard-Eyeglass-Suspension/dp/B01N3T4L21/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=glasses+holder+for+after+nose+surgery&qid=1582819075&sr=8-1)