

Surgical Procedure: SEPTOPLASTY

You and Dr. Ulrich are considering an operation on your nasal septum. The nasal septum is the “divider” that separates the two nasal passages of the nose. The operation is usually done to straighten the nasal septum or make it function more normally. It involves a surgical cut into the nasal septum and may also involve placing skin, cartilage, or bone from another part of the body into the area of the nasal septum. Complications from operations on the nasal septum are uncommon, but they do sometimes occur. It is possible that this operation will not help you, or that the problem you are now having will come back after the operation. It is even possible that you will be worse after the operation than you are right now. Because of these facts, Dr. Ulrich can make no guarantee as to the result that might be obtained from this operation. However, in the vast majority of patients, the result desired is achieved.

As in any surgical procedure, bleeding and infection are possible complications of operations on the nasal septum. These complications can cause prolonged illness, scarring, permanent deformity, poor healing wounds, and the need for further operations. These complications can occur in the nose and they can also occur where skin, cartilage, or bone is taken from to rebuild the nasal septum, if this had to be done. It is possible that a hole or perforation in the septum of the nose will result from this operation. Blockage of the nasal passages interfering with normal breathing, changes in the sense of smell, and “collapse” of the nasal septum are other uncommon complications from this operation. Allergic and other bad reactions to one or more of the substances used in the procedure are rare complications. Very, very rarely, allergic or bad reactions have been known to cause death. Personality changes and mental difficulties are also rare complications of this surgery, and these problems can occur even when the surgery is otherwise very successful.

What to expect after NASAL and/or SINUS SURGERY

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Activity & Diet

Gradually increase your diet as tolerated. Since an anesthetic is administered during surgery, you may be drowsy for a number of hours following surgery. You are not to drive or work around any hazardous equipment for 24 hrs after surgery. Take it easy for the first week and then return to normal activity. **DO NOT LIFT HEAVY OBJECTS OR BEND OVER DURING THE FIRST WEEK AFTER SURGERY.** Avoid any activities where you may be bumped in the nose. Avoid pressure on the nose when sleeping. **Do not travel outside the area for 2 weeks following surgery.**

Pain

There will be some pain and discomfort after surgery. You may take the pain medication prescribed or you may take Tylenol (Acetaminophen) as directed on the label. Do not take any aspirin, Motrin, or ibuprofen products since they may cause more bleeding. If pain is not controlled with the pain medication prescribed, contact our office.

Drainage

Initially after surgery you will have an increase in nasal discharge and may experience some drainage down the back of your throat. There may be a small amount of bright red bleeding from your nose, so do not be alarmed. A small amount is normal and may continue for 3-4 days. A small dressing will be placed on your upper lip to absorb any drainage. You may need to change this dressing several times a day. Call our office if you have any heavy bleeding.

General Care

You will have some nasal congestion, stuffiness and/or a headache during the first week after surgery. This is normal and expected. It will gradually decrease over the next couple of weeks. You may also experience a sore throat. A cool mist humidifier may help to keep secretions loose. Keeping your head elevated 30-45 degrees may help decrease the swelling and improve the drainage in your nose. Do NOT use the sinus rinse kit provided at your pre-op visit until advised to do so by Dr. Ulrich and/or his staff. **DO NOT BLOW YOUR NOSE UNTIL AFTER YOU ARE SEEN IN THE OFFICE.** Blowing your nose will put too much pressure on the surgery site. If you feel any fluid or congestion in your nose, wipe it gently or sniff back the fluid gently. If you must sneeze, keep your mouth open and sneeze through your mouth.

Medication

In addition to pain medication, an antibiotic may be prescribed. Please take this medication as directed.

Follow-up Appointment

A follow-up appointment has been made for you. Refer to your surgery letter for date and time. If this appointment needs to be changed, please contact our office.

Questions or Problems

If questions or problems arise during normal business hours, please do not hesitate to call the office at (810) 695-3766. For post-surgical medical issues after normal business hours, call the office at (810) 695-3766 and follow the prompts to be connected with Dr. Ulrich. If unable to connect through the office, contact Genesys information at (810) 606-5000 to have Dr. Ulrich paged.