



## **Sinus Surgery**

### **What is sinusitis?**

Sinuses are air-filled cavities in the bones of your face. These cavities are lined with mucous membranes. Sinusitis is the condition in which these membranes swell and become inflamed or the cavity becomes filled with infected material.

### **What is endoscopic sinus surgery?**

Endoscopic refers to the use of small telescopes that are introduced through the nostril, to get a close up view of the nasal cavity and sinuses. Special instruments are used to remove thin bony partitions leading to the sinuses and between the sinuses. The natural sinus drainage pathways are enlarged, and the diseased mucosa, polyps, and infectious material are removed, if present.

### **What can I expect after sinus surgery?**

Nasal packing or expandable tampons are normally placed into the nose, and often removed prior to discharge from the outpatient surgery suite. Bloody or mucous drainage is common for up to 10 days after surgery. Crusts can develop inside the nose. Facial pressure and pain is also common, and in a few patients the pain is moderate. A few patients run a low grade temperature. If a Septoplasty (repair of deviated septum) is also performed, the nose may be very congested for several days, and suture material can be felt in the front of the nose. Headaches are present in most patients, but usually mild. Tenderness over the cheeks and aching in the upper teeth are sometimes present.

### **What can I do to improve my changes for a good recovery?**

The most important factor is to keep the nose moist. You should irrigate or flush the nose with a saline product such as Ocean Spray, Ayr Nasal Saline, or Neil-Med Sinus Rinse (the best) at least 4 times a day. When the humidity is low, it helps to put a humidifier in the room. Do Not blow the nose forcefully for at least 5 days after surgery. Forceful blowing can lead to air in the orbit or a nosebleed. Avoid exposure to dust, airborne irritants and smoke.

### **When can I go back to work or school?**

Most patients can resume sedentary activities like schoolwork, desk jobs, etc., 4 or 5 days after surgery. Occupations requiring heavy lifting or strenuous activity shouldn't be performed for 10 days or so. There are a lot of variations, however, and you should discuss the matter with your physician or heed the instructions below.

### **When can I resume regular activity?**

You can drive, if necessary, the day after surgery. But you should not drive if you are taking prescription pain medication, as it will make you drowsy. You may bathe or shower the night of surgery. Sports or vigorous exercise should not be performed for at least a week following surgery.

### **Should I continue my sinus / allergy medications?**

It is OK to take decongestants, if necessary. Antihistamines such as Allegra, Claritin, Zyrtec, and Benadryl can be taken if necessary, but they often dry nasal mucous and can cause more crusting / drying in the nose. Allergy nasal sprays, such as Nasonex, Rhinocort, Nasacort, Astelin, Veramyst should be held until the 1<sup>st</sup> post-operative visit.

**What kind of follow-up can I expect?**

Typically a post-operative visit is scheduled between 1 and 2 weeks after surgery to perform debridement. Debridement is the process of cleaning dried secretions, packing material, crusts, and blood clots from the nose. A topical anesthetic will be sprayed into the nose prior to the procedure, which is performed in the office. For some patients this is an uncomfortable procedure, but a necessary procedure for ideal healing after sinus surgery.

**When should I call the doctor?**

- If you have persistent clear drainage from the nose.
- If you have swelling around the eye or changes in vision.
- If you have a temperature over 101.5F.
- If you have a severe headache or neck stiffness.
- If you have bleeding from the nose that won't stop.

**Discharge instructions:**

Call 502-425-5556 to make an appointment with \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ days / weeks / months.

**Medications:**

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**Community ENT & Allergy:**

**Dr. Brian Hawkins                      Dr. Joseph Creely**  
**4950 Norton Healthcare Blvd.**  
**Suite 209**  
**Louisville, KY 40241**  
**502-425-5556**