



CommunityENT

EAR • NOSE • THROAT • ALLERGY

Dr. Brian Hawkins, Dr. Joseph Creely and Jocelyn Jones PA-C
4950 Norton Healthcare Blvd Suite 209. Louisville, KY 40241

Phone (502)425-5556

www.communityent.com

Septoplasty +/- Inferior Turbinate Reduction Post Operative Instructions

What is the septum?

The septum is the partition that divides the nose into the right and left side. The septum is covered by skin called mucosa that has a rich blood supply. In approximately 80% of the population, the septum is not completely straight. When the septum isn't straight you can experience some of the following symptoms: recurrent nosebleeds, sinus infections, snoring, headaches, trouble breathing, facial pain or nasal congestion.

What are the inferior turbinates?

The inferior turbinates are paired tissue on the right and left side of your nose that warm and humidify the air. However, when they get congested or enlarged due to allergies or a septal deviation, you can have trouble breathing through the nose.

What happens during surgery?

During surgery, you are asleep under general anesthesia. The surgeon will use an endoscope to evaluate your nose. Then he/she will make an incision in the mucosa on the inside of your nose. There is no change to the outward appearance of your nose. The crooked bone is removed and the skin on the inside of your nose called your mucosa is sewed back together. Depending on your surgeon, he may trim your turbinates. Typically absorbable packing that helps support the mucosa is placed inside your nose. Sometimes, small tampons are placed inside the nose and are removed before you are discharged from the surgery center.

How should I prepare for my nasal surgery?

You should discontinue any aspirin or anti-inflammatory medications for 7 days prior to the surgery. If you are on any blood thinners, you will need to consult with the

surgeon and the prescribing physician on how to discontinue those medications before surgery. Prepare to be off work for 3-7 days after your surgery. Strenuous occupations may require up to 14 days off.

What are the possible complications?

The most common complications are nasal bleeding, infection and a septal perforation. A septal perforation is a hole between the right and left side of the nose. This can happen if the mucosa does not heal well or you manipulate your nose after surgery. Typically this hole is small, but if it is large, you could require additional surgery. A septal perforation can cause a whistling sound when breathing or issues with crusting and bleeding around the edges of the perforation.

There is a rare risk that the nose will not heal well causing a cosmetic deformity. If too much cartilage is removed, you could experience drooping of the tip of your nose. If you smoke, you should be aware that tobacco use inhibits your body's ability to heal. You will not heal as well or as quickly as a non-smoker.

What can I expect after surgery?

You will go home after the surgery. You can expect to have some pain after nasal surgery. You will be congested and typically have trouble breathing through your nose for 1-2 weeks after surgery. You may want to sleep in a recliner.

What do I need to do at home

You should rest and avoid picking up any heavy objects (nothing over 5-10lbs)
Your surgeon may want you to use saline rinses twice a day or the following regimen:
2 sprays in each nostril of Afrin 2x a day and saline spray 3x a day x 1 week.
You can eat and drink normally. You should avoid alcohol while taking pain medication. You will get a prescription for pain medication. If you are taking this medication you cannot drive a car. You can use Tylenol for pain.

When do I f/u with my doctor?

Typically the first follow up appointment is 7-14 days after surgery. During that appointment, your surgeon will use special instruments to clean out your nose.

When should I call my doctor?

Call the Office if:

- You have a significant nosebleed that you cannot stop within a few minutes
- You are short of breath, you have a fever or discolored drainage.

Updated 10/2020

