

ENDOSCOPIC SINUS SURGERY | Postoperative Care Instructions A PATIENT'S GUIDE

Your active participation in the postoperative phase of treatment is critical to the success of your surgery. Please read and follow the instructions below.

Bleeding:

It is normal to experience some nasal bleeding the afternoon/evening of surgery. You may go home with some gauze on your nose to catch the bloody drainage after surgery. This may need to be changed 4-6 times the night of the procedure. If more persistent bleeding occurs, lean forward slightly and gently pinch the bottom 2/3 of your nose between your thumb and forefinger. Hold this for approximately 10 minutes. If you are still experiencing bleeding, you may apply Afrin to your nose to shrink the blood vessels. Spray 3 puffs to the affected nostril(s) and then gently pinch the nose for 10 minutes. If this does not relieve the bleeding or if the bleeding is more significant, please call the hospital operator and ask for the ENT doctor on call. If extensive bleeding occurs, please call 911 or be seen at your closest emergency department.

Medications:

- *Pain medication:* The only medication you will need to take the night of surgery is pain medication. Ibuprofen or extra-strength Acetaminophen are often sufficient. You will receive a prescription for narcotic pain medication, and can use it if necessary, for break through pain.
- *Antibiotics/oral steroid:* If you are prescribed antibiotic or steroid medication following surgery, start these the day after surgery.
- *Nasal steroid spray/irrigation:* Start (or resume) your nasal steroid spray/irrigation one week after surgery.
- *Aspirin:* **DO NOT** take aspirin for at least three days after the surgery.

Saline:

Moisture is critical to proper healing. You will need to moisturize and rinse your nose for at least 2-3 weeks after surgery.

You will need the following supplies for post-surgery care:

- *Nasal Mist:* The day after surgery, start spraying your nose with saline mist spray. Apply 2-3 sprays to each nostril every one to two hours throughout the day. Common brands include: Ayr, Ocean, or Simply Saline. They are available over-the-counter at most pharmacies.
- *Nasal Irrigations:* The day after surgery, begin sinus rinses twice a day using the “NeilMed Sinus Rinse Kit” or equivalent (available for purchase at many pharmacies). Use gentle pressure when irrigating. If you have any discomfort with irrigation, reduce the amount of pressure you are applying or discontinue irrigations until the first post-operative visit.

Post-operative care:

- You may sniff back. If you need to sneeze, do not suppress it but instead sneeze with your mouth open. After 1 week, you may blow your nose gently.
- No strenuous activity for one week after surgery. No straining or lifting more than 20 lbs. You should not bend over at the waist to pick things up. Instead bend at the knees, with your head up. Light walking and normal household activities are acceptable immediately after surgery. You may resume exercise at 50% intensity after one week, and full intensity at two weeks. You may drive the day after surgery if you are not requiring narcotic pain medication.
- If you are taking antibiotics and experience stomach upset, active culture yogurt or acidophilus tablets (available at health food stores) on a daily basis may help. If you develop diarrhea, stop your antibiotics and contact our office. Persistent diarrhea may require further medical evaluation.
- You may eat a regular diet.
- You should plan on taking one week off from work and ideally have a half-day planned for your first day back.
- Do not fly without your doctor's clearance for 7 days after surgery.

Post-operative visits:

You will have frequent return visits to our office after surgery. At each visit, a procedure called nasal endoscopy will be performed. The sinus cavities may be cleaned in order to assure appropriate healing of the sinuses. Visits typically occur 1, 3, and 6 weeks after surgery. We recommend taking a dose of pain medication about 45 minutes to one hour before your first postoperative visit (as long as someone can accompany you to your visit). Post-operative visits are usually scheduled at the time of surgery scheduling, however if you have any questions about your post-operative visit you can contact our clinic.

Call our office if you experience any of the following:

- Fever higher than 101°F
- Clear, watery nasal drainage
- Any visual changes or marked swelling of the eyes
- Severe headache or neck stiffness
- Severe diarrhea
- Brisk bleeding

If you need to call after clinic hours for a concern, call the UC Davis Medical Center hospital operator at 916-734-2011 and ask for the "physician on call for ENT."

UC Davis Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery
916-734-5400
2521 Stockton Blvd, Suite 5200
Sacramento, CA 95817