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ENDOSCOPIC SINUS SURGERY

What to Expect after Endoscopic Sinus Surgery (ESS)

1. Nasal Drainage

Right after surgery, you will have drainage from your nose. At first, there may be a small amount of bright red bleeding; but do not be alarmed. A small amount is normal and may continue through the first week. A gauze dressing will be placed on your upper lip to absorb this drainage. It may be necessary to change the dressing several times on the day of our surgery. Any bright red bleeding that lasts more than ten minutes, or is heavy, should be reported to your doctor immediately. Old blood, which accumulated during surgery, is dark reddish-brown. It will drain for a week or more. It is of no concern. Drainage may continue for several weeks. The drainage may be thicker and yellow-green in color. This is also normal.

2. Nasal Congestion

For the first week after surgery, your head will feel stuffy. This is because you will have swelling of the mucous membranes of your nose. This is normal and expected. The stuffiness will gradually decrease over the next few weeks. So, please be patient. After this, an improvement in your nasal breathing should be noticed. Nasal packing may or may not be left in place after surgery. If you do have this packing, you will need to return to have it removed by your doctor.

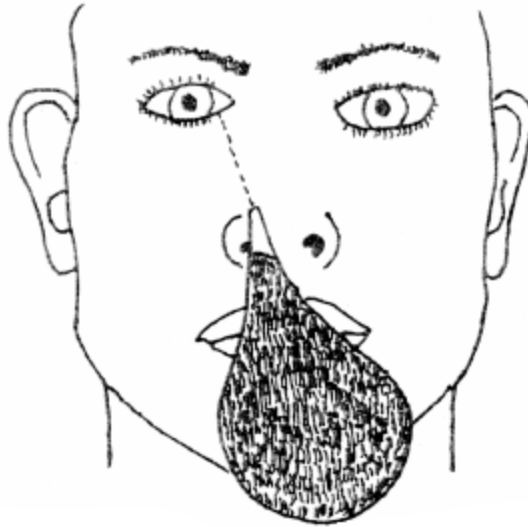
3. Discomfort After Surgery

There is some pain after surgery. Pressure may increase somewhat during the first week. This is due to increased swelling and the accumulation of sinus secretions. If a pain medication is prescribed, take as ordered. Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) may be used, according to package directions. Do not take aspirin or medications which contain aspirin. These products may increase bleeding. For additional pain relief, place ice packs over your cheeks every three or four hours for 15 to 20 minutes. It may take five to six weeks for full recovery. Please be patient during this time.

4. Medications

Take all medications as prescribed by your doctor. Usually, an antibiotic will be ordered to prevent an infection. Decongestants, nasal sprays, and sometimes a mild steroid are ordered to aid with healing and comfort. If you are taking medications for pain, please call the office during regular office hours if refills are needed. We are unable to refill narcotics outside of normal business hours. You should make sure you have enough medication to last through the night, weekends, and holidays.

Nose & Sinus Irrigation after Functional Endoscopic Sinus Surgery



Saltwater Irrigation

If you are to use saltwater irrigation:

1. Obtain an adult size nasal aspirator from your pharmacy.
2. Mix one-eighth (1/8) teaspoon salt and one (1) teaspoon baking soda into two (2) cups warm water.
3. Draw the solution into the aspirator, getting all the air out.
4. Stand over a sink. Bend your head forward and insert the aspirator inside the nose, past the nasal fold. Point the tip of the aspirator to the inside corner of the eye, on the same side you are irrigating. Evacuate the aspirator, gently at first, then vigorously after the stents are removed.
5. Open your mouth. Let the solution run into the sink from both your nose and mouth.
6. Vigorously flush each nostril with two (2) aspirators-full of solution.
7. Perform the irrigations two or three times a day until you are instructed to stop. After one or two weeks, the liquid should be clear after the flushing.

NOTE: You may be instructed to use both the steroid spray and nasal irrigation. If so:

1. First, irrigate the nose.
2. Follow with the steroid spray.

5. Postoperative Visits

It is very important to keep all appointments after surgery. At these visits, the doctor will clean and examine the operative area. This cleaning prevents scarring. The frequency of the visits varies depending on your rate of healing. As a general rule, you can expect four to six visits during the first one or two months after surgery.

We recommend that you eat before arriving for your appointment. Also, take your pain medication one hour prior to the first and second visits. If you are taking Tylenol with codeine, or another narcotic, have someone drive you. These medications may cause drowsiness. On occasion, it may be necessary for you to have something stronger for pain at that first and second visit. The doctor will discuss this option with you.

Precautions During the First Week

1. **Activity:** Even though your surgery may seem minor, it is not. Your body needs additional rest for healing. You should plan to stay at home the day of and the day after surgery. Observe for bleeding during this time. Call your doctor immediately if you have any bright red bleeding which lasts longer than 10 minutes or if the bleeding is heavy. You should gradually increase your activities over a one week period. Physical activity (swimming, jogging, exercise) may be resumed after two or three weeks. If approved by your surgeon.
2. **Do Not Blow Your Nose.** It is important that you do not blow your nose. You may sniff back or irrigate secretions. Blowing the nose places too much pressure on the operative site. It may cause bleeding. Usually, you may blow your nose after the first postop visit.
3. **Sneezing.** If you must sneeze, do so through your mouth with your mouth open. Sneezing through your mouth reduces pressure and discomfort of the operative site.
4. **Do Not Lift Heavy Objects.** Avoid bending over and lifting heavy objects (over ten pounds) during the first two to three weeks after surgery. These activities place pressure on the operative site and may cause bleeding.

Suggestions for Comfort

1. Keep your head elevated on three pillows. This position will help decrease swelling and allows for better drainage of nasal discharge.
2. Ice packs may be placed over your cheeks every three to four hours for 15-20 minutes. This will help decrease swelling and discomfort.
3. Use a cool vapor humidifier at your bedside for the first week after surgery. This will help loosen secretions and prevent crusting of the nose.
4. Take all medications as prescribed.
5. **WARNING:** Do not use any aspirin, aspirin-containing products, or Ibuprofen (i.e., Advil, Motrin) for two to three weeks as it may cause bleeding.

Call Your Doctor Immediately If You Have Any Of The Following:

1. Any vision problems, such as:
 - ♦ Loss of vision
 - ♦ Double vision
 - ♦ Black eyes
 - ♦ Bulging of one or both eyes
 2. Neck stiffness (you are not able to touch your chin to your chest), in addition to fever, laziness, and marked headaches.
 3. Fever over 101°
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If you have any questions or concerns, please call your doctor at (704) 868-8400.