

# Patient's Instructions

## NASAL SURGERY - SCOP

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_

MRN: \_\_\_\_\_

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to acquaint you with what you should and should not do following your nasal surgery. These instructions are based on experience and must be followed faithfully to assure a smooth recovery. Be sure that you and those who will be caring for you are familiar with these postoperative procedures. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call (910)295-0216.

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

Arrange for someone to care for you immediately following your surgery. You may still be groggy when you are released, so you will need a ride and someone to remain with you for at least the first 24 hours. Since you cannot drive for one week, you will need transportation to and from our office. If you live more than 30 minutes from Dr. Kilpatrick's office, you will need to make arrangements to stay within that range the first night following your surgery. The office can assist you in finding accommodations. You will receive several medication prescriptions you should take after surgery unless otherwise directed, and a list of medications to avoid, including aspirin. Follow these instructions carefully in order to minimize swelling, discoloration or bleeding.

This would be a good time to obtain the items you will need for your post-operative home care: Q-Tips, hydrogen peroxide, Polysporin Ointment and Neosynephrine 12-Hour Nasal Spray, saline nasal drops. You will need to have these for your first day post-operative visit.

To help minimize swelling, the head of the bed should be elevated to a 60 degree level for the first night following surgery. This can be accomplished by putting pillows under the head of the mattress. For the next three weeks an elevation of 45 degrees is desirable.

Be sure that comfortable clothing is available for your recovery period – nothing that must go over the head.

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery.

### DAY OF SURGERY

Wash your hair and face; and wear comfortable clothing to the office (something that buttons up the front). Do not wear make-up or fingernail polish. Men should shave closely.

# Patient's Instructions

## FOLLOWING SURGERY --- THE FIRST 12 HOURS

This period may be uncomfortable because of the nasal dressings. You will be given a medication to help and you should remain as quiet as possible during this time. Pain medications are prescribed as a precautionary measure and should only be taken if absolutely necessary. Do not take aspirin or any other over the counter medication without checking with your physician. It is **IMPORTANT** to have someone with you since you may be groggy from the effects of the anesthesia.

### HOME CARE PRODUCTS

On the first night following surgery, the lip may be cleaned externally with hydrogen peroxide on a Q-Tip.

First day after surgery the nose should be gently cleansed on the inside and around the outside with hydrogen peroxide as demonstrated. Coat the inside with Polysporin Ointment. Repeat this process 3-4 times daily for one week.

Starting day after surgery you will place 3-4 drops of nasal saline into each nostril 3-4 times daily

Do not blow the nose at all for three weeks. Use only clean Q-Tips to touch your nose as demonstrated.

At your one week post-operative visit, any remaining internal or external splints will be removed. During the second week after surgery, you will only need to clean the nose twice daily to remove the oily residue that is produced by the skin glands.

### AFTER SURGERY

The upper lip is a key area in nasal surgery. Therefore, do not disturb these tissues with excessive movement.

- 1) Avoid grinning, smiling or excessive movement of the upper lip.
- 2) Avoid rubbing the nostrils and base of the nose with Kleenex or a handkerchief. This only aggravates swelling and may cause infection.
- 3) Avoid getting the dressing soaking wet. When showering do not let the force of the water run directly on your face or nose.
- 4) Avoid "sniffing," that is, constantly trying to forcefully pull air through the nose. Some nasal blockage is to be expected and will subside gradually. *Do not use nose drops or nose sprays.*
- 5) Avoid sneezing. If you must, let it come out like a cough with your mouth open. If this becomes a real problem, we can prescribe medication to help.
- 6) If discharge is excessive, use a mustache dressing. If it becomes stuck, a few drops of hydrogen peroxide will help loosen it. Micropore™ Paper Tape by 3M is the least irritating to the skin.
- 7) To cleanse the upper teeth, apply toothpaste with washcloth or Q-Tip. The bottom teeth may be brushed as usual.
- 8) Avoid foods that are difficult to chew, such as steak and gum.
- 9) Use a lip brush to apply lipstick.

# Patient's Instructions

Remember that every operation, no matter how minor, is accompanied by swelling and discoloration of the surrounding tissue. There are several things you can do to help minimize swelling, discoloration and discomfort. During the first two days, it may help to apply a washcloth dipped in ice water (not an ice bag) diagonally across each eye changing it every twenty to thirty minutes. We will demonstrate this procedure for you before you leave the surgical facility.

- 1) Stay up after the first 24 hours (sitting, standing, walking around as much as possible. Of course, you should rest when you are tired.
- 2) Avoid bending over or lifting heavy objects for two weeks.
- 3) Avoid hitting or bumping your nose. It is not advisable to pick up small children and you should sleep alone for at least one week after surgery.
- 4) Continue to sleep with the head of the bed elevated for three weeks. Try not to roll over on your face. You may find that a reclining chair will be more comfortable than a bed.
- 5) Avoid sun exposure to the face for at least one month and sunburn for one year. Ordinary, indirect sun rays are not harmful, but remember to use a sunscreen faithfully from now on.
- 6) Keep busy. Watch TV, read a book.

## **RESUMING DAILY ACTIVITIES**

- 1) Contact lenses may be inserted the day after surgery.
- 2) No glasses one week after surgery. After that, they must be suspended from the forehead for a period of six weeks. We will demonstrate this procedure for you because the pressure of the glasses may change the contour of the nose.
- 3) You may drive after one week.
- 4) You may bathe as soon as you feel strong enough, but it is advisable to have someone nearby in case you should require help.
- 5) You may wash your hair with someone's help after two or three days, but avoid getting the dressing soaking wet. A cap dryer or hand held dryer may be used.
- 6) You may tweeze your eyebrows after two weeks.
- 7) You may resume and exercise program after three weeks, but no diving, water skiing or other contact sports for two months.

## **RETURNING TO WORK AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

When you should return to work or school and resume your normal social activities depends on the amount of physical activity involved and how much swelling and discoloration you experience. The "average" patient may return to work or school seven to ten days after surgery. This is an individual matter.

# Patient's Instructions

## WHAT TO EXPECT

**Swelling** - There will be a certain amount of swelling. It is not serious nor an indication that something is wrong. Remember that even a small amount of swelling in the face makes features appear distorted. Swelling is usually more pronounced in the morning (another reason to stay up during the day) and sometimes a little greater on the second day after surgery.

**Pain** - As a result of the swelling, you may experience a feeling of pressure in your nose; a deep, bruised sensation; and possibly a headache. If cold compresses do not help, you may take the pain medication prescribed for you, but only as a last resort.

**Discoloration** - It is not unusual to have varying amounts of discoloration following nasal surgery. Like swelling, it sometimes becomes more obvious after the first day or so. It is only temporary and will subside gradually over the next two weeks. You may use make-up to camouflage these areas.

**Insomnia** - You may find it difficult to sleep, especially if you are not used to sleeping on your back. Before resorting to medication, you might try sleeping in a reclining chair which provides a cozy feeling without allowing you to turn over.

**Weakness and nausea** - It is not uncommon for a person to feel dizzy, weak, nauseated or experience palpitations after having an anesthetic. Fortunately, this clears up within a few days. Should these symptoms persist, please report them to Dr. Kilpatrick's office at (910)295-0216.

**Numbness** - The tip of the nose and the upper lip may feel numb following nasal surgery, interfering with your normal facial expressions. This is only temporary and will gradually disappear over time.

**Temperature** - Following any operation of this nature, your body temperature may rise to 100 degrees. This is caused by mild dehydration and is nothing to worry about. Report any persistent temperature above 100 degrees.

**Hemorrhage** - Nasal blockage will create more mucus drainage for several days. It will be blood-tinged and nothing to worry about unless it becomes profuse and an obvious nose bleed. Should this occur, go to bed, apply ice compresses to the neck and face and report it to Dr. Kilpatrick's office (910)295-0216.

**Depression** - It is not unusual for a person to experience a mild depression following surgery of this nature. No matter how diligently you try to prepare yourself for the recovery period, it is still shocking to see yourself swollen and bruised. The best "Medicine" is to keep busy with worthwhile projects. Write letters, call a friend, read a book or watch TV. Above all, be patient. Remember that as each day passes, the worst is farther behind you and the best is yet to come.

If you have any questions or concerns you may contact our office at 910-295-0216. Our normal business hours are Monday-Friday 8am-5pm and Fridays 8am-4pm. If it is after normal business hours you may call Moore Regional hospital operator and ask for the plastic surgeon on call for Pinehurst Surgical Clinic.

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**PINEHURST SURGICAL**

Nasal Surgery Instructions  
SCOPPage 4 of 4

**Facial Plastic Center**  
910-295-0216

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