

**Arizona Head, Neck & Facial Surgery / Arizona Sinus Center**  
Phone (602) 258-9859 Fax (602) 256-0820

# **Post-operative Instructions Following: Turbinate Reduction / Turbinate Submucous Resection**

## **General:**

Inferior turbinates are long, sausage shaped structures which protrude from the side-wall of the internal nasal cavity on each side. These structures are composed of a ridge of bone lined with thick, well vascularized soft tissue and covered by a moist mucous membrane. These structures warm, filter and humidify the air inspired through the nose. When irreversibly enlarged from chronic inflammation or congenital enlargement, reduction in the size of inferior turbinates may be necessary. Inferior turbinate reduction or submucous resection is performed as an outpatient procedure. If you have other medical conditions such as sleep apnea, you may spend one night in the hospital after your procedure.

Absorbable foam or gel dressings may be placed in the nose to minimize bleeding. On rare occasion, nasal sponge packing may be placed to control bleeding. The nose may be congested or obstructed in the first few to several days following the procedure. This is relieved with saline rinses (see Nasal Care following the Surgery below). Mild oozing of blood from the nose is expected in the first 48 hours.

## **Diet:**

You may have liquids by mouth once you have awakened from anesthesia. If you tolerate the liquids without significant nausea or vomiting then you may take solid foods without restrictions. If nausea is persistent, an anti-emetic medication may be prescribed for you. Some patients experience a mild sore throat for 1-2 days following the procedure. This usually does not interfere with swallowing.

## **Pain control:**

Patients report mild nasal pain and congestion a few to several days following turbinate surgery. This is usually well controlled with prescription strength oral pain medications (Vicodin, Tylenol #3, Ultracet). Please take the pain medication prescribed by your surgeon when needed. You should avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) such as aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen (Excedrin, Motrin, Naprosyn, Advil) because these drugs are mild blood thinners and will increase your chances of having a post-operative nose bleed. Please contact our office (602) 258-9859 if your pain is not controlled with your prescription pain medication.

## **Activity:**

No heavy lifting or straining for 2 weeks following the surgery. You should plan for 2-3 days away from work. If your job requires manual labor, lifting or straining then you should be out of work for 2 weeks or limited to light duty until the 2 week mark. Walking and other light activities are encouraged after the first 24 hours.

## **Nasal care following the surgery:**

Rinse the nose 3 times daily with saline solution beginning the afternoon following surgery. This can be accomplished with a Neil-Med Sinus Rinse bottle (available over the counter at most pharmacies) or a Netti-Pot. Gently apply a layer of antibiotic ointment to the nostrils twice daily for the first week. Hot steam showers as needed are very helpful in relieving nasal congestion and crusting. Sleep with the head elevated for the first 48 hours; this will minimize pain and congestion. You may use two pillows to do this or sleep in a reclining chair. Your surgeon may have you spray your nose with decongestant spray (oxymetazoline or neosynepherine) as needed for persistent nasal congestion and oozing. **Soaking a cotton ball with oxymetazoline or neosynepherine spray, stuffing it into the front of the nasal cavity and pinching the nostrils together for 10 minutes is often effective in halting troublesome bleeding during the first few days.**

## **Follow-up appointment:**

Your follow up appointment in the office will be 5-8 days following your surgery. This visit should be scheduled prior to your surgery (at the time of your pre-operative visit). If you do not have the appointment made, please contact our office when you arrive home from the surgery center.

## **Please call our office immediately if you experience:**

- \*Brisk nose bleeding which won't stop with the oxymetazoline soaked cotton ball and 10 minutes of pressure (see Nasal care following surgery)
- \*Fever greater than 101 degrees Fahrenheit
- \*Purulent discharge (pus) coming from the nose
- \*Severe nasal pain or headache

**Office: (602) 258-9859 (Dr. Rehl or an on-call Dr. are available at all times)**

**If the Dr. does not return your call in 15 minutes, please proceed to your nearest emergency room. Call 911 for severe bleeding or difficulty breathing.**

**Dr. Rehl's email for non-urgent questions: [rrehl@arizonasinus.com](mailto:rrehl@arizonasinus.com)**

**Website: [www.arizonasinus.com](http://www.arizonasinus.com)**