

# Greenville ENT Post-op Instructions



## What to Expect at Home

### **Endoscopic Sinus Surgery: Your Recovery**

The tip of your nose and your upper lip and gums may be numb. Feeling will return in a few weeks to a few months. Your sense of smell will not be as good after surgery. It will improve and probably return to normal in 6 weeks. You will probably be able to return to work or school in about 1 week and to your normal routine in about 2 weeks, but this varies with your job and the extent of your surgery. Most people feel normal within 6 weeks.

You may go home with a drip pad under your nose to collect mucus and blood. Change it only when it bleeds through. You may have to do this every hour for 24 hours right after surgery. You may have some swelling or bruising of your nose, upper lip, or cheeks, or around your eyes. Your nose will be sore and will bleed. You may feel "stuffed up" like you have a bad head cold. This will last for several days after surgery.

You will have post op visits with your doctor regularly for several weeks after your surgery. Your doctor will check to see that your sinuses are healing well.

This care sheet gives you a general idea about how long it will take for you to recover, but each person recovers at a different pace. Follow the steps below to get better as quickly as possible.

## Medicine

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|  | <p>You will most likely get prescriptions for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Antibiotics</li><li>Pain medicine (such as Norco) for use as needed</li><li>Nausea medicine (such as Zofran) for use as needed</li><li>Possibly steroids (such as a medrol pack taper)</li></ul> |
|  | <p>You should also buy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Saline nasal spray</li><li>A decongestant nasal spray (such as Afrin) for use as directed for bleeding or congestion.</li></ul>                                                                                         |
|  | <p>You should restart your Pre Op medications, unless instructed otherwise.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | <p>You should avoid aspirin, NSAIDs (such as Motrin), and other blood thinners for 7-14 days.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|  | <p>Take pain medicines exactly as directed.<br/>Many pain medicines contain acetaminophen (Tylenol), and too much acetaminophen can be harmful.</p>                                                                                                                                       |
|  | <p>Use a steroid nasal spray (such as Nasacort) to reduce inflammation, but you may stop it for a week or so if it is uncomfortable at first.</p>                                                                                                                                         |

## Activity

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|  | <p>Rest when you feel tired. Getting enough sleep will help you recover. Some patients sleep propped up on pillows. This can reduce swelling. You can also sleep in a reclining chair. You may lie flat if you prefer.</p> |
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|  | Try to walk each day. Walking boosts blood flow and helps prevent pneumonia and constipation.                                                                                                                                        |
|  | For the first week, try not to bend over or lift anything heavier than 10 pounds. This may include a child, heavy grocery bags and milk containers, a heavy briefcase or backpack, cat litter or dog food bags, or a vacuum cleaner. |
|  | You may take a shower or bathe normally.                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|  | Avoid sawdust, chemicals, and excessive dust for 2 weeks.                                                                                                                                                                            |
|  | Avoid strenuous activities, such as biking, jogging, weight lifting, or aerobic exercise, for 1-2 weeks and then ease back into these activities over 2 to 3 weeks.                                                                  |
|  | You may drive when you are no longer taking prescription pain medicine and feel up to it.                                                                                                                                            |
|  | You will most likely be able to return to work or school in about 1-2 weeks and to your normal routine. This varies with your job and the extent of your surgery though.                                                             |
|  | Do not blow your nose for 2 weeks.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|  | Do not put anything into your nose.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|  | If you must sneeze, open your mouth and sneeze naturally.                                                                                                                                                                            |
|  | After any packing is removed, use saline (saltwater) nasal washes to help keep your nasal passages open and wash out mucus and bacteria. You can buy saline nose spray at a pharmacy.                                                |
|  | You can wear your glasses when you wish. Do not wear contacts until the day after the surgery.                                                                                                                                       |
|  | It is okay to use a humidifier to keep room air moist, especially in the bedroom.                                                                                                                                                    |

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|  | Do not travel by airplane for at least 2 weeks, unless okayed by your doctor. |
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## Diet

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|  | You can eat your normal diet. If your stomach is upset, try bland, low-fat foods like plain rice, broiled chicken, toast, and yogurt.                                                                                                                                                   |
|  | You may notice that your bowel movements are not regular right after your surgery. This is common. Try to avoid constipation and straining with bowel movements. If you have not had a bowel movement after a couple of days, you may use an over-the-counter laxative such as Miralax. |

## Wound care

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|  | You most likely will <b>not</b> have an incision (cut). You will have a drip pad under your nose to collect blood. Change it only when it has bled through. You may have to do this every hour for 24 hours right after surgery. When bleeding stops, you can remove it. |
|  | If you have packing in your nose, leave it in. Your doctor will take it out at your follow up visit.                                                                                                                                                                     |

## Ice and elevation

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|  | To help with swelling and pain, you may put ice or a cold pack on your nose for 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Put a thin cloth between the ice and your skin. |
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**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It is also a good idea to know your test results and allergies, and keep a list of the medicines you take.

## When should you call for help?

Call **911** anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

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|  | You pass out (lose consciousness).                                    |
|  | You have severe trouble breathing.                                    |
|  | You have chest pain, have shortness of breath, or you cough up blood. |

## Also seek medical care if:

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|  | You have signs of infection, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased pain, swelling, warmth, or redness</li><li>• Very severe headache or neck stiffness</li><li>• Vision loss</li><li>• A fever greater than 101F.</li></ul>  |
|  | You bleed severely.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|  | You have symptoms of a blood clot in your leg (called a deep vein thrombosis), such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pain in the calf, back of the knee, thigh, or groin</li><li>• Redness and swelling in your leg or groin</li></ul> |
|  | You have pain that does not get better after you take pain medicine.                                                                                                                                                                              |