



James A. Rieger, MD
316-652-9333

Post Operative Information for Rhinoplasty

The following information is intended for your well-being and will assist you during your recovery period. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call us at 316-652-9333 (there is an answering service 24 hour/day). For after hours, post-surgical concerns, if you have left a message and have not received a call back within 30 minutes you may call Kansas Medical Center at 316-300-4000 and have them contact me. If you are experiencing a medical emergency and need immediate medical attention go to the nearest emergency room or if necessary dial 911.

Some reasons to call:

- Nose bleed (small amounts of oozing may be expected)
- Fever
- Pain not relieved by medication
- Severe pain
- Severe or asymmetric swelling
- Redness, warmth, drainage or odor from the operative site
- Persistent nausea, vomiting, inability to urinate or constipation
- If you have ANY questions or concerns regarding your condition or surgery

A Note About Questions

Your healing journey is unique, and no two recoveries are exactly alike. If something worries you, please reach out to our office directly. We know your medical history and surgery details, and can give you advice that's safe and specific to you. Online forums and social media may offer general information, but they can also be confusing or misleading. We're here for you—day or night—so please call us anytime you have questions or concerns. 316-652-9333

Following surgery you will go to the post-anesthesia care unit to recover prior to leaving the facility. A special nasal splint dressing will be placed over your nose and will stay in place for 7 days. This splint protects and minimizes swelling of the nose and is important for an optimal result. The splint and sutures will be removed by Dr. Rieger at your first post-op visit.

Being lightheaded or having weakness after surgery is possible. It is recommended to have someone assist you to and from your car, with your seat belt, dressing/undressing, in the bathroom and getting in and out of bed. **It is advisable that you have a responsible person stay with you for the first 24 hours following surgery.**

Your tissues will react with swelling and a feeling of tightness which gradually resolves over the next few days to weeks. Expect the nose to be numb but sensation normally returns in time (approximately six months). You can expect to feel sleepy for a day or two after surgery.

During the first few days you may ooze from the nose, this is normal. A "drip pad" (a small gauze pad held in place with tape on the cheeks) may be used under the nose to absorb any bleeding or drainage. This may be changed by you or the person helping you as needed when at home.



James A. Rieger, MD
316-652-9333

Post Operative Information for Rhinoplasty

After one day you may bathe but **do not get the nasal splint wet**. If the splint gets wet it will come off before the necessary splint wearing time - 7 days.

During the first few weeks use a pillow or a recliner to keep your head elevated when sleeping or resting to help prevent further swelling or bruising. Bruising around the eyes and the stuffiness of the nose is expected and will resolve gradually.

Cool packs may be used over the forehead to decrease some discomfort. Use only for a few minutes at a time as cold injury to the skin may occur with prolonged exposure. **DO NOT** place the cool pack on the nose or the splint.

We will see you for a follow-up appointment 1 week after your surgery. This is usually scheduled at your pre-op appointment.

Avoid the risk of extreme swelling & post operative problems by avoiding the six "S's"

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) Straining | 4) Sunshine |
| 2) Stooping | 5) Smoking |
| 3) Sexual Activity | 6) Strenuous activities |

"DO"

- Have your prescriptions filled right away.
- Completely finish your antibiotics and use pain medication as needed, following directions.
- Gradually progress to a normal diet beginning with liquids and light foods (i.e. Jello, crackers, soups).
- Resume taking any prior daily prescriptions, **UNLESS** they are on the list of medications to avoid.
- Gently apply Bacitracin 5 times daily (you may use more as needed) with a Q-Tip to the nose sutures along the incision between the nostrils and inside the nostrils.
- You may shower one day after surgery. Do not wash the incision sites or press on the breasts.
- Start walking slowly around your home as soon as you feel able. Moving around helps lower your risk of blood clots in your legs. Take it easy—don't push yourself too hard. Most patients are back to their normal activity level in about 6 weeks.
- Most patients can return to work in about a week, depending on their job. Be sure to talk with Dr. Rieger about what's right for you.
- Start your antibiotics the afternoon you get home from surgery—take one dose in the afternoon and one before bed. Beginning the next day, take them four times a day: at breakfast, lunch, dinner, and before bed.



James A. Rieger, MD
316-652-9333

Post Operative Information for Rhinoplasty

"DO NOT"

- Do not remove the nasal splint.
- Do not take responsibility for children or needy adults.
- Do not make any important decisions or sign important papers in the 24 hours following surgery or while taking pain medication.
- Do not get your nose wet while bathing in a tub for 3-4 weeks.
- Do not use hot tubs or swim in lakes or oceans for eight weeks.
- Do not drive, operate machinery or tools until it is specifically allowed (usually 3 days) OR if you are taking narcotics.
- Do not use hot packs.
- Do not lift anything over 5–10 pounds (roughly a gallon of milk).
- Do not participate in sports or workouts for six weeks.
- Do not blow, rub or pick the nose (use Bacitracin as directed in the "Do" section).
- Do not scratch or touch the incisions. You may use Benadryl by mouth for itching.
- Do not smoke
- Do not drink alcohol after surgery for one week. Never mix narcotics with alcohol.

Remember:

- Swelling and bruising usually improve within a few weeks but may shift toward your feet due to gravity—this is normal. Full healing takes time—typically 6 months, sometimes up to a year. Be patient; your recovery depends on your health and how gently you rest.
- You may take Tylenol if needed. However, many prescribed pain meds already contain Tylenol—do not take both, as too much can harm your liver. Avoid aspirin and any aspirin-containing medications for two weeks before and after surgery due to bleeding risks. If unsure, ask your pharmacist.
- Allergic reactions such as rash, itching, wheezing, or throat tightness may occur. Stop all medications and call the office if you experience any of these symptoms.
- Avoid direct sun on the nose for one month, and use sunscreen regularly for the first year after surgery to protect the skin. You may apply moisturizers or creams after three weeks—avoid the incision sites if they are not fully closed.