**Rhinoplasty/Nasal Surgery**

**General Instructions:**

1. Resume home medications as previous prescribed unless indicated by surgeon.
2. Take antibiotics and other prescriptions as prescribed
3. Keep all follow up appointments.
4. Call 205-228-7970 to schedule or verify your post-operative appointment. Typically this is 10-14 days following surgery.
5. Call 205-228-7970 during regular business hours or report to the nearest emergency department for:
	* Fever >101.5 unresponsive to medication
	* Severe pain that will not improve
	* Severe nausea & vomiting
	* Nasal bleeding that does not stop after 10 minutes or causes choking
	* Shortness of breath
	* Any other concerns

**PREPARATION:**

* For two weeks prior to surgery, avoid aspirin, ibuprofen, Aleve, Advil, Naprosyn, Goody’s Powders, etc. Tylenol is ok.
* If you are on blood thinners/anticoagulants such as Coumadin or Eliquis, please discuss with the physician who prescribed the medication about the possibility of discontinuing those medicines several weeks prior to surgery. Alcohol and red wine, in particular, also seem to make bruising worse. Some patients find that Arnica Montana found in health food stores helps to reduce bruising in those prone to it.
* Do not eat anything after midnight the night before surgery, unless specifically told to do so.
* Schedule post-op appointment for approximately 7-10 days after your surgery.
* Fill prescriptions if already obtained. Alert Dr. Fort if you have any specific medication needs or restrictions.
* Obtain nasal decongestant (such as Afrin) and nasal saline spray (over the counter, no Rx needed)
* Schedule pre-op testing/anesthesia appointment if not already done for you.

**THE DAY OF SURGERY:**

* Take only the medications recommended by the anesthesiologist the morning of surgery with a small sip of water. Bring a copy or list of your medications. If in question regarding what medications to take, please bring in all of your medications.
* Wear a shirt that buttons or zips up the front to avoid pulling over the nose.
* Wear no makeup or jewelry
* You must have someone available to be present to pick you up and take you home. They do not necessarily have to stay at the hospital the whole time.
* Most patients will be able to go home the same day. However, if you are having your own rib cartilage harvested, likely you will spend at least one night in the hospital.

**AT HOME:**

* Iced gauze pads or ice packs (a series of baggies of frozen peas finely chopped ice often work best) help reduce swelling/bruising and should be used as much as possible for four to five days. This is the single most effective thing the patient can do to reduce swelling, bleeding, pain and accelerate the recovery time. These are best placed over the eyes on the sides of the nose without putting pressure on the nose itself.
* Rest in bed with your head elevated on 2-3 pillows. Endeavor to keep your head above your heart for the first week.
* You will usually have a ‘mustache’ dressing placed prior to discharge. Replace this as needed when it is saturated.
* Some oozing from the incisions is normal and expected for about three days. However, bleeding that "fills up a coffee cup" is unusual, and you should notify your surgeon.
* Use "Afrin" spray or a nasal decongestant spray (oxymetazoline over the counter) only as needed if the bleeding or oozing is excessive. Use two sprays per side of nose and repeat in 5 minutes one time. This will stop most bleeding. The decongestant properties can slow healing, so only use this if bleeding is excessive.
* Take medication only as instructed. If you are taking blood thinners such as Coumadin or aspirin, discuss this with Dr. Fort. You will be given a prescription for an antibiotic, pain and nausea. Discuss with Dr. Fort any specific needs or allergies you have. Often, the Rx’s can be given at pre-op appointment if you desire.
* Avoid trauma or pressure on the nose, such as burying your head in a pillow.
* Clean the incision on the outside and just inside the nose with a cotton tipped applicator and peroxide diluted 1:1 with tap water and apply antibiotic ointment to the incisions three times per day until told to stop.
* If you have had ear cartilage or rib cartilage harvested, please treat these incisions in the same way. Do not submerge any incisions until cleared by Dr. Fort.
* It is normal to be drowsy, but try to eat a light meal the evening following surgery. You may eat anything you like, but soft foods which limit excessive chewing are usually best the first several days. Avoid eating anything hot.
* It is normal for the breathing and swelling to get worse for the first 2-3 days after surgery.
* It is normal for breathing to be worse at this time than before surgery due to intranasal swelling and possible placement of nasal splints.
* If there is excessive bleeding, discoloration, swelling, visual loss or sudden or severe pain, call the office at 205-228-7970 during regular business hours or report to the nearest emergency room. Please note that any messages left may not be checked for 1-2 days, so be sure to speak to a person.

**MORNING AFTER SURGERY:**

* Keep cold compresses on and keep your head elevated as much as possible during the day.
* Avoid straining and letting your nose get lower than your heart. Bend at the knees and not the waist.
* Be sure to use a saline mist spray 5-10 times per day. Often, the saline will come back out after spraying, but continue to use it.
* Continue cleaning the incision and just inside the nose to decrease build-up of crusting blood.
* You may still have some nuisance bleeding and the bruising will worsen.
* Leave splint and tape in place. They will be removed at your follow-up visit. However, if either falls off, it is ok—you do not need to replace.
* Keep incision dry for the first three days. You may shower then but avoid direct spray on the face.

**FOLLOW-UP CARE:**

* You will usually be seen in 7-14 days for removal of internal and external splints as well as tape on the outside of your nose. If the splint falls off the outside of the nose, it will not need to be replaced.
* Most sutures used will dissolve. If not, they will be clipped at follow-up visit.
* Normally, 80% of the swelling is gone by 3 months. Please note the nasal tip swelling is usually the most persistent. The appearance when the dressings are removed, is NOT the final appearance. Sometimes, minor touch up procedures and interventions may be beneficial during the year-long healing period.
* Most patients will have a tiny scar across the columella above the lip. This too takes time to heal, but usually fades to an imperceptible nature.

**HEALING CARE:**

* You may resume light exercise and make-up within 10-14 days after surgery unless advised otherwise. You may resume washing the face and nose in your regular manner at this time.
* Alcohol can prolong swelling. Avoid it for 2 to 3 weeks.
* Numbness of the teeth and nose are common for the first couple of months. It may take a year for sensation to completely return and for the stiff post-operative nose to begin softening.
* The nose is not completely healed for one year and is still quite fragile for a month or more. The repair is done with absorbable sutures, so the repair is "held in place" by scar tissue mostly after the sutures are gone. Even mild trauma in the initial post-operative period can cause damage that may not be noticed initially as further healing ensues.
* Pre-op and Post-op pictures will be made. Please sign the consent form regarding the photos.
* Full healing takes a number of months and a final check-up is advisable 12 months after surgery. Please keep your post-operative appointments.