**Sinus 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.

**Call the clinic (during regular business hours) or present to the nearest emergency department immediately for:**

1. Change in vision

2. Increased swelling around the eyes

3. Neck stiffness or deep head pain

4. Severe nasal pain that will not improve

5. Continued Nausea or Vomiting

6. Bright red blood that lasts more than ten minutes or causes choking

7. Fever greater than 101.5 degrees that does not respond to medication

**What is sinus surgery?**

* The goal of sinus surgery is to enlarge the natural openings of the sinuses into the nose. Enlarging these openings makes it easier for the sinuses to drain, even when swollen from infection or environmental irritants. Sinus surgery is also used to remove nasal polyps, nasal masses, and, sometimes, to straighten the nasal septum.
* Using small cameras with lights on the end (endoscopes) the surgery is performed through the nose, without the need for any external incisions. In addition to the use of endoscopes, special instruments have been designed to perform the task of removing thickened and diseased tissue from the opening of these sinuses.
* Recovery time varies from patient to patient, but, in general, usually lasts between one to two weeks. Initially, patients should expect to feel congested and some mild sinus pressure. As the sinuses slowly heal, this congestion and pressure will decrease.
* **It is important to remember that, while we perform the surgery, you play an active role in the success of its outcome. It is up to you to abide by the postoperative restrictions and implement the postoperative care instructions**

**Pain Control**

* You will be prescribed a narcotic pain medication. You may take this as needed for the first few days following surgery.
* Tylenol may be taken ***instead of*** your pain medication (if it is sufficient to control your pain). Avoid taking Tylenol in addition to pain medication as your medicine already has Tylenol as one of its components.

**Post-Operative Care**

* Start your nasal irrigations the day after surgery.
  + These irrigations must be performed twice a day, however it does not hurt to perform them more frequently. This is essential to the healing process. It removes the crusts that form as the nasal tissue heals and prevents scarring within the nose. Please see the following page for specific instructions.
* If some of the packing begins to fall out of the nose, don’t panic. Call the office or On Call Doctor for instructions.
* Cough and sneeze with your mouth open.
* You may eat a regular diet or whatever you tolerate best.
* DO NOT perform any heavy lifting (nothing greater than 15 lbs or 1 gallon of milk), bending or straining.
* DO NOT blow your nose or pick at your nose for at least 2 weeks.
* DO NOT take aspirin or aspirin containing medications (Advil, Motrin, or any other NSAIDS).
* DO NOT fly without your doctor's clearance for 3-5 days after surgery.

**NASAL/SINUS IRRIGATIONS**

* It is required that you wash out your nose and sinus cavities with a saline solution. This is good in the post-operative period to flush out pus, crusts, and debris. In the long term, this is also used to mechanically wash out infections.
* You may also be prescribed steroids and antibiotics to go into the bottle additionally. They will be given to you in clinic or sent to you in the mail. Please follow the directions on adding the medication into the rinse.
* There are a number of different saline solutions for nasal irrigations on the market, including NeilMed**™** Sinus Rinse, the Neti pot, and Simply Saline. These saline preparations are for patient convenience and are inexpensive, but the cheapest method is to make your own "home brew".

**"HOME BREW" RECIPE:**

* 1 quart boiled or distilled water. (If boiled, allow to come back to room temperature)
* 1 teaspoon canning/pickling/kosher salt (non-iodized)
* 1 teaspoon baking soda

1. Mix and irrigate the nose with 60cc of the above solution on each side **2 times a day** (at least). A baby bulb syringe is effective, but they are difficult to clean and can lead to a contamination risk if using the same syringe for more than three days. The NeilMed**™** Sinus Rinse bottle is easy to clean with soap and water.
2. While in the shower or leaning over a sink, aim the irrigation diagonally (away from the septum) and flush out your nose. The fluid will circulate in and out of your sinus cavities, coming back out your nose. Earn a gold star if you can get it to flush out your mouth! The irrigations help to clean the clots from your nose and prevent scarring after surgery.
3. If you experience ear pain while irrigating, this is likely due to irritation of the Eustachian tubes in the back of your nose. These tubes equalize the pressure in your ears. To minimize this discomfort, concentrate on opening your palate during the irrigation to allow the saline to flush out of your mouth.
4. It may be convenient to mix larger quantities of the saline solution and store it in your refrigerator, warming up each day’s supply prior to use. Consider buying one gallon of distilled water and adding 4 tsp of salt and 4 tsp of baking soda.
5. **It is imperative to keep your irrigation device as clean as possible!** Wash out with soap and water after each use.