



STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
DEPARTMENT OF OTOLARYNGOLOGY – HEAD & NECK SURGERY

STANFORD SINUS CENTER

801 Welch Road
Stanford, CA 94305-5739

Adult Clinic (650) 723-5281
Clinic Fax (650) 725-6685

Endoscopic Sinus Surgery Postoperative Care Instructions

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Your active participation is critical to the post-operative success of your surgery. The following guidelines will help to increase the likelihood of a successful surgical outcome.

Immediately after surgery:

1. **Bleeding:** It is normal to experience some bloody oozing during the first 1-2 nights. If steady nose bleeding occurs, tilt your head back slightly and breathe gently through the nose. Dab your nose gently with tissue, but do not blow your nose. You may use 4-5 sprays of Afrin (available in all pharmacies) every 20 minutes for 1 hour to shrink the blood vessels. If heavy bleeding persists, please call the hospital operator at 650-723-4000 and ask for the ENT doctor on call.
2. **Medications:** The first night after surgery, the only medication you need to take is pain medication as needed. If you wish a non-narcotic alternative, extra-strength Tylenol is often sufficient. Start your antibiotics and oral steroids the morning after surgery. If you were using a nasal steroid spray pre-operatively, you *do not* need to restart it now (it will be restarted 1-2 weeks after the surgery). Do not take aspirin or aspirin-related products (Motrin/Advil/Aleve/Plavix, etc.) for at least three days after the surgery.
3. **Saline:** Starting the night of surgery if possible, or the morning after surgery at latest, spray your nose with saline mist 2-3 sprays each nostril every 1-2 hours throughout each day while awake (Ocean, or Simply Saline brands, which are available over-the-counter). Also, begin Neilmed bottle sinus irrigations (available at all pharmacies) twice a day using clean water (distilled water, bottled water, or boiled and cooled water). Moisture and clearance of clots is critical to the proper healing of your nasal cavity. You will need to moisturize and rinse your nose for at least 2-3 months after surgery.

The first week:

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1. Do not blow your nose for the first week. After 1 week, assuming you've had a more 'standard sinus surgery' alone, you may blow your nose gently but please confirm with your physician beforehand. If you need to sneeze, do so with your mouth open.
2. Refrain from strenuous activity for one week, including bending, straining, or lifting more than 20 lbs. Light walking and routine daily activities are acceptable immediately after surgery. You may resume exercise at 50% intensity after one week, and full intensity after two weeks. You may drive the day after surgery if you are not using narcotic medication. Ask your doctor about other scenarios.
3. If you experience an upset stomach from your antibiotics, active-culture yogurt or acidophilus tablets (available at health food stores) may help. If you develop severe diarrhea lasting more than 1 day, stop your antibiotics and contact our office. Persistent diarrhea may require further medical evaluation.

Beyond the first week:

You will have frequent return visits to our office (typically occur 1, 3, and 6 weeks after surgery) for sinus cleanings and exams. At each visit, nasal endoscopy will be performed, with possible sinus debridement (cleaning), to assure appropriate healing and patency of the sinuses. We recommend taking a dose of pain medication about 30 minutes before your first postoperative visit, and having someone accompany you on that visit. Please write down any questions you may have so that we can answer them at your appointment.

At any time:

Call our clinic if you experience any of the following:

- Fever higher than 102°F
- Persistent clear, watery nasal drainage
- Any visual changes or marked swelling of the eyes
- Severe headaches or neck stiffness
- Severe diarrhea
- Brisk bleeding

- During office hours (8am-5pm, Monday to Friday): **650-392-4728**
- After hours, call Stanford Hospital at **650-723-4000**, and ask for ENT doctor on call.
- Call **911** for any emergency.