

Addenbrooke's Treatment Centre

Information after Septorhinoplasty

Septorhinoplasty

- The septum is the thin piece of cartilage and bone between the right and left sides of your nose. In some people, the septum is bent into one side of the nose, blocking it. Sometimes this is because of an injury to the nose, but it can just grow that way.
- The first part of this operation - the septoplasty - is an operation to straighten the septum. The second part of the operation - the rhinoplasty - is to change the shape of the nose. Your surgeon will discuss with you what improvements you can expect.

The procedure

- The operation will be whilst you are asleep under general anaesthetic. As most of septorhinoplasty is done from inside the nose, you may only have a couple of tiny scars around your nose.
- The surgeon will first make a cut inside your nose and straighten the septum by taking some of the cartilage and bone away. The surgeon will then break the bones of your nose to reshape it. Dissolvable stitches are used to hold it all in place.
- Septorhinoplasty takes approximately two to three hours to complete.
- You will normally have a plaster of paris or plastic splint applied on the outside of your nose to help keep the bones in shape. This will be taken off after one week. **Please do not remove it yourself.**
- You may have a dressing (known as a nasal pack) in each side of your nose to keep things in place and to prevent bleeding. You will have to breathe through your mouth whilst the dressings are in place. The dressings are usually removed the morning after the operation. You may also have small pieces of plastic (known as splints) in your nose to prevent scar tissue from forming. We will take these out one to two weeks after surgery.

After the procedure

- You may experience some discomfort at the operation site. We have painkillers that we can give as and when required.

- Your nose will probably feel uncomfortable and blocked for the first few weeks. You may be prescribed some drops or spray to help with this. It may take up to three months for your nose to settle down and for your breathing to be clear again. Try to stay away from smoky places.
- You may get some blood coloured watery fluid from your nose for the first two weeks or so. This is normal and is nothing to worry about.
- Your nose and eyes will be bruised and swollen for a few weeks after your operation.
- Do not blow your nose for about a week after your operation, or it may start bleeding. If you think you are going to sneeze, try to do it with your mouth open, as this will protect your nose.
- There will be some stitches inside your nose. These will dissolve and fall out by themselves.

Work

- You should take at least two weeks off work. To minimise the risk of infection during this time, please rest at home and avoid crowds, smoky places and people with coughs and colds.
- You should also avoid exercising and playing contact sports for six weeks after your operation and you should avoid flying for two weeks.

Follow-up

- You will be booked for an appointment at the outpatients' clinic for one week after your operation, to remove the splint and/or plaster of paris from your nose.

Side effects

- As with any operation, there are risks associated with having a general anaesthetic. However, septorhinoplasty is generally a very safe operation.
- There is a one percent risk of bleeding after the operation. You may require nasal packs to stop the bleeding.
- There is a four percent risk of infection. Infection can be serious, so see a doctor if your nose is getting more blocked and sore, or if you get a green, smelly discharge.
- Scar tissue can form inside the nose, but this rarely causes problems.
- Very rarely, patients experience numbness of their teeth, which settles in time.

For more information, please contact

If you are worried about your condition you can contact one of the following people:

- Addenbrooke's Day Surgery Unit: 01223 256330
- Ely Day Surgery Unit: 01223 652279
- Your consultant's registrar: 01223 245151
- Your General Practitioner (GP)



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



Document history

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