

## POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

# Sinus Surgery

(with or without septoplasty/turbinate reduction)

### What to Expect After Sinus Surgery

- **Bleeding:** It is normal to have some bloody discharge for the first 1-2 days after your procedure, especially after you irrigate your sinuses. If steady bleeding occurs after surgery, lean forward and hold firm pressure on the soft part of your nose. Avoid any nose blowing. If this does not stop the bleeding you may use Afrin<sup>®</sup> spray followed by holding pressure. If several attempts have been made to control the bleeding at home, call the office for additional directions.
- **Pain:** You may experience nasal and sinus pressure and pain for the first several days after surgery. Extra-Strength Tylenol<sup>®</sup> is often all that is needed for mild post-operative discomfort. You should avoid aspirin and NSAIDs such as Motrin<sup>®</sup>, Advil<sup>®</sup>, and Aleve<sup>®</sup> (see below). If Tylenol<sup>®</sup> is not sufficient to control the pain, you should use the post-operative pain medication prescribed by your doctor.
- **Fatigue:** You can expect to feel very tired for the first week after surgery. This is normal and most patients plan on taking at 3-7 days off of work to recover. Every patient is different and some return to work sooner.
- **Nasal congestion and discharge:** You may experience congestion and discharge for the first few weeks after surgery. Your nasal passage and breathing will return to normal 2-3 weeks after surgery.
- **Postoperative visits:** You will have a certain number of postoperative visits depending on what surgery you have. During these visits your nose and sinuses will be cleaned of fluid and blood that accumulates after surgery. These visits are very important to aid the healing process. Mild discomfort may be experienced during the cleaning and taking pain medication 45 minutes prior to the visit can help.

### What to Avoid After Endoscopic Sinus Surgery

- **Nose Blowing and Straining:** You should avoid straining, heavy lifting (> 20 lbs) and nose blowing for at least 5 days after surgery. Straining or nose blowing soon after surgery may cause bleeding. You can resume 50% of your regular exercise regimen at 1 week after surgery and your normal routine 2 weeks after surgery.

- **Aspirin or Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory (NSAIDs) medications:** Aspirin and NSAIDs such as Motrin<sup>®</sup>, Advil<sup>®</sup>, and Aleve<sup>®</sup> should be stopped 2 weeks prior to surgery. These medications may cause bleeding and should be avoided for 1-2 weeks after surgery. This recommendation may be adjusted by your physician.
- **Steroid Nasal Sprays:** If you were taking nasal steroid sprays prior to surgery you should avoid using these for at least 1 week after your procedure to allow the lining of the nose and sinuses to heal.

### Postoperative Care Instructions

- **Nasal Saline Spray:** Nasal saline mist spray can be used every 2-3 hours after surgery and can make your nose more comfortable after surgery. These sprays (Ayr<sup>®</sup>, Ocean<sup>®</sup>, Simple Saline<sup>®</sup>) are over-the-counter medications and can be purchased in any pharmacy.
- **Sinus Irrigations:** You will start sinus irrigations with a sinus rinse kit (NeilMed<sup>®</sup> Sinus Rinse Kit) the day after surgery. It is recommended this be performed 4 times daily during the immediate postoperative period. This may feel strange at first however will become quite soothing as it cleans out the debris in your sinuses. You can expect some bloody discharge with the irrigations for the first few days after surgery.

### When to Call After Surgery

- Fever after the day of surgery higher than 101°F
- Constant clear watery discharge after the first week of surgery
- Sudden visual changes or eye swelling
- Severe headache or neck stiffness
- Severe diarrhea
- Steady, brisk nose bleeding that doesn't get better after using Afrin<sup>®</sup>