



Nasal surgery: aftercare advice

Information for patients from Day Surgery

You have had **nasal (nose) surgery**. The following explains what you should do when you get home to look after yourself and your wound.

When you get home and for the first few days after your surgery

- Arrange for someone to collect you from hospital and look after you for the first 24 hours.
- You must rest for 24 to 48 hours after your operation.
- If you have had a general anaesthetic, avoid drinking alcohol, smoking, or taking sleeping tablets for 24 hours after your operation.
- If you have had a general anaesthetic, do not drive, cook, or operate any machinery for 24 to 48 hours after your operation.
- Avoid smoking, physical work, and blowing your nose for one week, unless told otherwise.
- Avoid people with colds and coughs. Avoid large crowds for this reason.
- If you need to sneeze, do so freely.
- Take all medication you have been prescribed. If you have been prescribed antibiotics, take the full course.
- Nose drops should be used, as directed, 10 minutes before steam inhalation (see next page for instructions).

How will I feel after my operation?

Expect to feel as if you have had a bad cold or 'flu' for the first few weeks. This is because the lining of your nose will swell up following surgery.



How do I control my pain after surgery?

You will have been given painkillers by the hospital, to take home with you. Take these according to the instructions on the label when you feel pain. If your pain is not controlled by these tablets contact one of the Day Surgery Centres for advice (contact details at the end of this leaflet).

I am bleeding, is this normal?

- A small amount of bleeding, such as a few spots of blood on a handkerchief/tissue, or some bloodstained discharge from your nose, is normal and is nothing to worry about.
- You may have a few large dark red or brown clots coming from your nose or going down the back of your throat for the first one to two weeks; again, this is normal and nothing to worry about.
- **If you bleed a lot of bright red blood, this is not normal.** If this happens, sit down in a chair, pinch your nose, and breathe through your mouth. Ask someone else to make up an icepack (some ice in a plastic bag) and hold it over the bridge of your nose.

If this does not stop the bleeding, contact the Day Surgery Centre (phone numbers are on the next page) or, in an emergency, go to your nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department or urgent treatment centre.

When can I return to work?

This depends on the type of surgery you have had. Please follow the advice below, unless told otherwise by your consultant.

- **Septoplasty and Functional Endoscopic Sinus Surgery (FESS)**
To avoid the possibility of infection, you should not work for two weeks.
- **Nasal Polypectomy**
To avoid the possibility of infection, you should not work for one week.
- **Bilateral Antral Washout**
If you had a local anaesthetic you can return to work the day after surgery. If you had a general anaesthetic (you were asleep for your procedure) you should not work for one week.
- **Laser to Inferior Turbinates**
To avoid the possibility of infection, you should not work for two weeks.

Steam inhalation

1. Put a large container, for example a washing-up bowl, on a table.
2. Pour three pints of boiling water into the bowl. Do this slowly and carefully to avoid splashing the hot water on yourself.
3. Sit down in front of the bowl with a towel over your shoulders.
4. Pull the towel over your head to form a 'tent' over the bowl.
5. Breathe the steam in through your nose and out through your mouth for at least five minutes.
This needs to be done two to three times a day for four to six weeks.

Things to remember after surgery

- Take medication as prescribed, especially antibiotics or nose drops.
- Go to all follow-up appointments.
- Use steam inhalation (see previous page) at least three times a day for two weeks.
- If you have been prescribed Otrivine nose drops, use them before each inhalation.
- If you need to sneeze, do so freely.

Things to avoid for the first two weeks after your operation

- Smoking or any smoky atmosphere.
- Dirty and dusty atmospheres.
- Heavy, physical work, including fitness training.
- Blowing your nose hard (gentle blowing is acceptable but try steam inhalation first).
- Close contact with people suffering from colds or 'flu' (avoid crowds for this reason).
- Too much alcohol.
- Swimming and diving.

What if I have any questions or concerns?

If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Day Surgery on the numbers below or your GP.

- Channel Day Surgery, **William Harvey Hospital**, Ashford
Telephone: 01233 616263 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
- Canterbury Day Surgery Centre, **Kent and Canterbury Hospital**
Telephone: 01227 783114 (7.30am to 8pm)
Telephone: 07887 687645 (8pm to 7.30am)
- Day Surgery Unit, **Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital**, Margate
Telephone: 01843 234499 (7.30am to 8pm)
Telephone: 07887 651162 (8pm to 7.30am)

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 783145, or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation