



Ear, Nose & Throat Consultants of North Mississippi

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SEPTOPLASTY

Septoplasty is a surgical procedure in which the nasal septum is straightened. The nasal septum is the sheet of cartilage and bone that ideally divides your nose into two equal parts. The septum usually lies directly in the center of the nose.

A septoplasty is done if the septum is so crooked that it causes a medical problem. The most common symptom from a deviated (crooked) septum is difficulty breathing through the nose. The symptoms are usually worse on one side and actually occur on the opposite side of the bend in the septum. In some cases, the crooked septum can interfere with the drainage of the sinuses, resulting in repeat sinus infections. The septum may also need to be straightened in individuals undergoing sinus surgery so that the instruments needed for this operation can be placed in the nasal cavity.

The operation is done through incisions inside the nose, without any external incision. Badly deviated portions of the septum may be removed entirely, or they may be removed, readjusted and reinserted in the nose. The operation takes about ½ to 1 hour depending on the complexity of the deviation. It is done on an outpatient basis under general anesthesia. Generally nasal packing is not used, however, in some cases, nasal packing and/or soft plastic splints are placed for one to several days.

There are always risks with surgery. You might have bleeding, which may require nasal packing or get an infection. There is also the usual risk of general anesthesia.

After surgery you will have a gauze drip pad under your nose. Change the gauze whenever it becomes soaked with blood. This bleeding is normal and should subside a little more each day. You may also have special packing inside your nose to help stop bleeding. The doctor may also place a splint in your nose or over the top of your nose. You will be given prescriptions for pain medication and antibiotics when you leave. **Apply bactroban ointment to your nasal cavities 3 times daily until follow up.**

You may put ice in a plastic bag, cover it with a towel and gently place it over your nose for 15-20 minutes out of every hour to reduce swelling. Do not sleep with the ice pack on your nose. Treatment with ice is most effective for the first 24 hours. Sleep with your head elevated on 3-4 pillows to help reduce swelling. If you have a splint on your nose, keep it dry. Always take your medications exactly as directed.

To keep bleeding to a minimum:

- Do not blow your nose. Use a tissue to dab up any blood.

- If you have to sneeze, keep your mouth open.

- Do not lift anything heavy or do any vigorous exercise until your doctor tells you it's OK.

- Do not strain during bowel movements.

- Do not pick your nose.

Call your doctor if the blood from your nose is bright, cherry red and you seem to be bleeding more than when you first went home, you have trouble breathing or you develop itching, swollen skin or a rash. You may be allergic to your medicine.