



Postoperative Care

Postoperative fevers

- Low grade fevers (up to 100 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius) are not uncommon after surgery. Cause of these low-grade fevers is not well understood but may be due to the effects of anesthesia, or minor collapse of some of the lung tissue (atelectasis). Treatment for low-grade fevers would include deep breathing exercises to try and expand the lungs, as well as mild physical activity. If the fevers do not subside after one to two days, become more significant or are associated with other concerning symptoms, the patient is encouraged to call our clinic for further evaluation.

Throat

Tonsillectomy

- Tonsillectomy can be a very painful surgery to recover from. Postoperative pain following tonsillectomy is not considered a complication but rather an expectation. In most, cases, the pain involves throat pain and sometimes pain that radiates into the ears. This pain will often last a week to a week and a half following surgery. In some cases the pain becomes greater several days (3-5 days) after surgery than immediately after surgery. Other common symptoms that accompany a tonsillectomy are foul-smelling breath, nausea and malaise.
- The most significant complication for patients undergoing tonsillectomy is post-tonsillectomy bleeding. This occurs when a blood vessel in the site of the removed tonsil becomes exposed and then bleeds into the throat. Although it is uncommon, especially the first couple days after surgery, to spit up some blood-colored saliva, post-tonsillectomy bleeding is usually marked by spitting up bright red blood or clots of blood. Post-tonsillectomy bleeding is considered an emergency. The patient is urged to call our clinic or physician on-call so that appropriate intervention may be taken.

Adenoidectomy

- Although adenoidectomy frequently accompanies a tonsillectomy, the postoperative symptoms related to adenoidectomy are not usually as severe as those following tonsillectomy. In patients just undergoing adenoidectomy, there may be some associated throat pain and some pain localized to the back of the nose but this is usually less than in those patients undergoing tonsillectomy. In addition, it is not uncommon for patients who have undergone adenoidectomy to have foul-smelling breath for up to one to two weeks after surgery. In addition, it is common for patients to develop symptoms of nasal congestion and postnasal drainage for one to two weeks after adenoidectomy as this area heals.



Postoperative Care

Ear

Tympanostomy Tubes

- Recovery following tympanostomy tube placement is generally mild. Patients may develop mild discomfort in their ears for a day or two, however, generally this is usually not long lasting. In addition, placement of tympanostomy tubes may lead to some ear drainage for several days or longer; the purpose of postoperative eardrops is to dry up the ear and prevent further drainage. In the first couple days after surgery, while drops are being placed, it is not uncommon for some blood-colored ear drainage to drain out of the ear after drops are placed. If the patient has prolonged drainage, greater than one week, or if there is excessive plain, they are encouraged to contact the clinic for further evaluation

Nose

Septoplasty/Turbinate Surgery

- Drainage following septoplasty/turbinate surgery is a common finding. This drainage may include both mucus and bloody drainage. This may last one to several days after surgery and often times will require placement of a mustache gauze dressing to soak up some of this drainage. If the drainage becomes bloodier or does not slow down after several days, the patient is urged to call the clinic for further evaluation.
- Nasal congestion is a very common symptom following septoplasty/turbinate surgery. This may be caused both by swelling on the inside of the nose due to the surgery, as well as placement of splints in the nose. As such, the congestion may last just several days or may not subside until the splints are removed in the postoperative period by the physician. If the swelling does not slowly subside after surgery or is associated with significant pain, the patient is encouraged to call the clinic for further evaluation. Pain in the nose or cheeks following septoplasty/turbinate surgery is also a common symptom. The pain again may last up to several days or may not subside until nasal splints are removed. If the pain does not subside in the absence of splints, increases after several days or is associated with increasing swelling and tenderness to the outside of the nose, the patient is encouraged to call our clinic for further evaluation.



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Sinus

Endoscopic Sinus Surgery

- Pain and nasal congestion are frequently common symptoms after sinus surgery. The pain may be localized to the nose or may involve the cheek area as well. The pain is usually tolerable with prescribed medications by the responsible physician. If the pain does not subside after several days or is not tolerable even with the administration of prescribed pain medications, the patient is urged to call the clinic for further evaluation.
- Nasal drainage may also be expected after sinus surgery. Again, this nasal drainage may involve both mucus as well as blood drainage. It is not uncommon for the patient to have some blood-colored drainage for up to a week after surgery. Often times the patient is encouraged to perform nasal irrigations at some point in the immediate postoperative period as specified by the responsible physician. The administration of saline irrigations may also result in the evacuation of clotted blood thereby resulting in some blood-colored drainage as well. If the drainage does not subside after several days, becomes increasingly bloody or is constant in nature, the patient is urged to call the clinic for further evaluation.
- A rare but serious complication following sinus surgery involves that of orbital trauma/bleeding. Symptoms associated with this complication would include visual changes such as double vision, loss of vision, blurry vision, eye pain, swelling around the eye or bruising involving the tissues around or in the eye. If any of these symptoms are present, this is considered an emergency and the patient is urged to call the clinic immediately for further evaluation.
- Another rare but significant complication involves the leak of CSF (spinal fluid) into the nose following surgery. This complication may be recognized by the constant, slow dripping of clear to blood-colored secretions from the nose for several days after surgery. In addition, the onset of headaches following surgery, although common, may herald the onset of the complication as well. If these symptoms are noted by the patient, the patient is encouraged to call the clinic for further evaluation.