

Informed Consent - Rhinoplasty Surgery

INSTRUCTIONS

This is an informed-consent document that has been prepared to help inform you about rhinoplasty surgery, its risks, and alternative treatments.

It is important that you read this information carefully and completely. Please sign the consent for surgery as proposed by your plastic surgeon.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Surgery of the nose (rhinoplasty) is an operation frequently performed by plastic surgeons. This surgical procedure can produce changes in the appearance, structure, and function of the nose. Rhinoplasty can reduce or increase the size of the nose, change the shape of the tip, narrow the width of the nostrils, or change the angle between the nose and the upper lip. This operation can help correct birth defects, nasal injuries, and help relieve some breathing problems.

There is not a universal type of rhinoplasty surgery that will meet the needs of every patient. Rhinoplasty surgery is customized for each patient, depending on his or her needs. Incisions may be made within the nose or concealed in inconspicuous locations of the nose in the open rhinoplasty procedure. In some situations, cartilage grafts, taken from within the nose or from other areas of the body may be recommended in order to help reshape the structure of the nose. Internal nasal surgery to improve nasal breathing can be performed at the time of the rhinoplasty.

The best candidates for this type of surgery are individuals who are looking for improvement, not perfection, in the appearance of their nose. In addition to realistic expectations, good health and psychological stability are important qualities for a patient considering rhinoplasty surgery. Rhinoplasty can be performed in conjunction with other surgeries.

ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT

Alternative forms of management consist of not undergoing the rhinoplasty surgery. Certain internal nasal airway disorders may not require surgery on the exterior of the nose. Risks and potential complications are associated with alternative surgical forms of treatment.

RISKS OF RHINOPLASTY SURGERY

Every surgical procedure involves a certain amount of risk and it is important that you understand these risks and the possible complications associated with them. In addition, every procedure has limitations. An individual's choice to undergo a surgical procedure is based on the comparison of the risk to potential benefit. Although the majority of patients do not experience the following complications, you should discuss each of them with your plastic surgeon to make sure you understand the risks, potential complications, and consequences of rhinoplasty.

Bleeding- It is possible, though unusual, to experience a bleeding episode during or after surgery. Intraoperative blood transfusions may be required. Should post-operative bleeding occur, it may require an emergency treatment to drain the accumulated blood or blood transfusion. Hypertension (high blood pressure) that is not under good medical control may cause bleeding during or after surgery. Accumulations of blood under the skin may delay healing and cause scarring. Do not take any aspirin or anti-inflammatory medications for 2 weeks before or after surgery, as this may increase the risk of bleeding. Non-prescription "herbs" and dietary supplements can increase the risk of surgical bleeding. Hematoma can occur at any time following injury. If blood transfusions are necessary to treat blood loss, there is the risk of blood-related infections such as hepatitis and HIV (AIDS). Heparin medications that are used to prevent blood clots in veins can produce bleeding and decreased blood platelets.

Infection- Infection is unusual after surgery. Should an infection occur, additional treatment including antibiotics, hospitalization, or additional surgery may be necessary.

Scarring- All surgery leaves scars, some more visible than others. Although good wound healing after a surgical procedure is expected, abnormal scars may occur within the skin and deeper tissues. Scars may be unattractive and of different color than the surrounding skin tone. Scar appearance may also vary within the same scar. Scars may be asymmetrical. There is the possibility of visible marks in the skin from sutures. In some cases scars may require surgical revision or treatment.

Damage to Deeper Structures- There is the potential for injury to deeper structures including nerves, tear ducts, blood vessels, muscles, and lungs (pneumothorax) during any surgical procedure. The potential for this to occur varies according to the type of rhinoplasty procedure being performed. Injury to deeper structures may be temporary or permanent.

Change in Skin Sensation- It is common to experience diminished (or loss) of skin sensation in areas that have had surgery. There is the potential for permanent numbness within the nasal skin after rhinoplasty. The occurrence of this is not predictable. Diminished (or loss) of skin sensation in the nasal area may not totally resolve after rhinoplasty.

Asymmetry- The human face is normally asymmetrical. There can be a variation from one side to the other in the results obtained from rhinoplasty. Additional surgery may be necessary to attempt to revise asymmetry.

Skin Discoloration / Swelling- Some bruising and swelling normally occurs following rhinoplasty. The skin in or near the surgical site can appear either lighter or darker than surrounding skin. Although uncommon, swelling and skin discoloration may persist for long periods of time and, in rare situations, may be permanent.

Seroma- Fluid accumulations infrequently occur in between the skin and the underlying tissues. Should this problem occur, it may require additional procedures for drainage of fluid.

Pain- You will experience pain after your surgery. Pain of varying intensity and duration may occur and persist after rhinoplasty. Chronic pain may occur very infrequently from nerves becoming trapped in scar tissue.

Allergic Reactions- In rare cases, local allergies to tape, suture materials and glues, blood products, topical preparations or injected agents have been reported. Serious systemic reactions including shock (anaphylaxis) may occur to drugs used during surgery and prescription medications. Allergic reactions may require additional treatment.

Delayed Healing- Fracture disruption or delayed wound healing is possible. Some areas of the nose may not heal normally and may take a long time to heal. Areas of skin may die. This may require frequent dressing changes or further surgery to remove the non-healed tissue. **Smokers have a greater risk of skin loss and wound healing complications.**

Skin Sensitivity- Itching, tenderness, or exaggerated responses to hot or cold temperatures may occur after surgery. Usually this resolves during healing, but in rare situations it may be chronic.

Nasal Septal Perforation- Infrequently, a hole in the nasal septum will develop. The occurrence of this is rare. Additional surgical treatment may be necessary to repair the nasal septum. In some cases, it may be impossible to correct this complication.

Nasal Airway Alterations- Changes may occur after a rhinoplasty or septoplasty operation that may interfere with normal passage of air through the nose.

Surgical Anesthesia- Both local and general anesthesia involve risk. There is the possibility of complications, injury, and even death from all forms of surgical anesthesia or sedation.

Substance Abuse Disorders- Individuals with substance abuse problems that involve the inhalation of vasoconstrictive drugs such as cocaine are at risk for major complications including poor healing and nasal septal perforation.

Skin Contour Irregularities- Contour irregularities may occur. Residual skin irregularities at the ends of the incisions or "dog ears" are always a possibility and may require additional surgery. This may improve with time, or it can be surgically corrected.

Sutures- Most surgical techniques use deep sutures. You may notice these sutures after your surgery. Sutures may spontaneously poke through the skin, become visible or produce irritation that requires removal.

Unsatisfactory Result- Although good results are expected, there is no guarantee or warranty expressed or implied, on the results that may be obtained. You may be disappointed with the results of rhinoplasty surgery. This would include risks such as asymmetry, loss of function, structural malposition, unacceptable visible or tactile deformities, unsatisfactory surgical scar location, poor healing, wound disruption, and loss of sensation. It may be necessary to perform additional surgery to attempt to improve your results.

Shock- In rare circumstances, your surgical procedure can cause severe trauma, particularly when multiple or extensive procedures are performed. Although serious complications are infrequent, infections or excessive fluid loss can lead to severe illness and even death. If surgical shock occurs, hospitalization and additional treatment would be necessary.

Cardiac and Pulmonary Complications- Surgery, especially longer procedures, may be associated with the formation of, or increase in, blood clots in the venous system. Pulmonary complications may occur secondarily to both blood clots (pulmonary emboli), fat deposits (fat emboli) or partial collapse of the lungs after general anesthesia. Pulmonary and fat emboli can be life-threatening or fatal in some circumstances. Air travel, inactivity and other conditions may increase the incidence of blood clots traveling to the lungs causing a major blood clot that may result in death. It is important to discuss with your physician any past history of blood clots or swollen legs that may contribute to this condition. Cardiac complications are a risk with any surgery and anesthesia, even in patients without symptoms. Should any of these complications occur, you may require hospitalization and additional treatment. If you experience shortness of breath, chest pains, or unusual heart beats, seek medical attention immediately

ADDITIONAL ADVISORIES

Skin Disorders / Skin Cancer- Rhinoplasty is a surgical procedure to reshape of both internal and external structure of the nose. Skin disorders and skin cancer may occur independently of a rhinoplasty.

Long-Term Results- Subsequent alterations in nasal appearance may occur as the result of aging, weight loss or gain, sun exposure, pregnancy, menopause, or other circumstances not related to rhinoplasty surgery. Future surgery or other treatments may be necessary.

Female Patient Information- It is important to inform your plastic surgeon if you use birth control pills, estrogen replacement, or if you believe you may be pregnant. Many medications including antibiotics may neutralize the preventive effect of birth control pills, allowing for conception and pregnancy.

Intimate Relations After Surgery- Surgery involves coagulating of blood vessels and increased activity of any kind may open these vessels leading to a bleed, or hematoma. Activity that increases your heart rate or blood pressure may cause additional bruising, swelling, and the need for return to surgery and control bleeding. It is wise to refrain from sexual activity until your physician states it is safe.

Mental Health Disorders and Elective Surgery- It is important that all patients seeking to undergo elective surgery have realistic expectations that focus on improvement rather than perfection. Complications or less than satisfactory results are sometimes unavoidable, may require additional surgery and often are stressful. Please openly discuss with your surgeon, prior to surgery, any history that you may have of significant emotional depression or mental health disorders. Although many individuals may benefit psychologically from the results of elective surgery, effects on mental health cannot be accurately predicted.

Medications- There are many adverse reactions that occur as the result of taking over-the-counter, herbal, and/or prescription medications. Be sure to check with your physician about any drug interactions that may exist with medications which you are already taking. If you have an adverse reaction, stop the drugs immediately and call your plastic surgeon for further instructions. If the reaction is severe, go immediately to the nearest emergency room. When taking the prescribed pain

medications after surgery, realize that they can affect your thought process and coordination. Do not drive; do not operate complex equipment, do not make any important decisions, and do not drink any alcohol while taking these medications. Be sure to take your prescribed medication only as directed.

PATIENT COMPLIANCE

Follow all physician instructions carefully; this is essential for the success of your outcome. It is important that the surgical incisions are not subjected to excessive force, swelling, abrasion, or motion during the time of healing. Personal and vocational activity needs to be restricted. Protective dressings and splints should not be removed unless instructed by your plastic surgeon. Successful post-operative function depends on both surgery and subsequent care. Physical activity that increases your heart rate or blood pressure may cause bruising, swelling, fluid accumulation and the need for return to surgery. It is wise to refrain from intimate physical activities after surgery until your physician states it is safe. It is important that you participate in follow-up care, return for aftercare, and promote your recovery after surgery.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Most health insurance companies exclude coverage for cosmetic surgical operations or any complications that might occur from cosmetic surgery. If the procedure corrects a breathing problem or marked deformity after a nasal fracture, a portion may be covered. **Many insurance plans exclude coverage for secondary or revisionary surgery.** Please carefully review your health insurance subscriber-information pamphlet.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The cost of surgery involves several charges for the services provided. The total includes fees charged by your doctor, the cost of surgical supplies, anesthesia, laboratory tests, and possible outpatient hospital charges, depending on where the surgery is performed. Depending on whether the cost of surgery is covered by an insurance plan, you will be responsible for necessary co-payments, deductibles, and charges not covered. Additional costs may occur should complications develop from the surgery. Secondary surgery or hospital day surgery charges involved with revisionary surgery would also be your responsibility.

ADDITIONAL SURGERY NECESSARY

There are many variable conditions that may influence the long-term result from rhinoplasty surgery. Secondary surgery may be necessary to obtain optimal results. Should complications occur, additional surgery or other treatments may be necessary. Even though risks and complications occur infrequently, the risks cited are particularly associated with rhinoplasty surgery. Other complications and risks can occur but are even more uncommon. The practice of medicine and surgery is not an exact science. Although good results are expected, there is no guarantee or warranty expressed or implied, on the results that may be obtained. In some situations, it may not be possible to achieve optimal results with a single surgical procedure.

DISCLAIMER

Informed-consent documents are used to communicate information about the proposed surgical treatment of a disease or condition along with disclosure of risks and alternative forms of treatment(s), including no surgery. The informed-consent process attempts to define principles of risk disclosure that should generally meet the needs of most patients in most circumstances.

However, informed-consent documents should not be considered all-inclusive in defining other methods of care and risks encountered. Your plastic surgeon may provide you with additional or different information which is based on all the facts in your particular case and the current state of medical knowledge.

Informed-consent documents are not intended to define or serve as the standard of medical care. Standards of medical care are determined on the basis of all of the facts involved in an individual case and are subject to change as scientific knowledge and technology advance and as practice patterns evolve.

It is important that you read the above information carefully and have all of your questions answered before signing the consent.

