

## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING NASAL AND SINUS SURGERY

### WHAT TO EXPECT

**Drainage:** It is not uncommon to experience blood & mucus drainage for up to 1 week after surgery. During this time, you may wish to keep a gauze bandage taped beneath your nose.

**Congestion:** You may feel nasal congestion for up to 2 weeks after surgery as the nasal lining heals. Regular irrigation will help speed up this healing process and remove clots.

**Pain:** Everyone's pain threshold is different. Use paracetamol and ibuprofen for mild pain and the stronger pain relief prescribed if needed (please note that co-codamol has paracetamol in it, so additional paracetamol should not be taken). In the first few days after surgery, it may be useful to take such medication just before you go to bed. Cool compresses or sleeping with your head elevated on 2 pillows may help decrease pain and swelling.

**Fatigue:** Everyone reacts differently to anaesthetics. Don't be concerned if you feel tired in the first week after surgery. Typically, most patients reach normal energy levels after 1-3 weeks. We would expect you to have up to 2 weeks off work and please ask the nursing staff before you leave hospital if you require a note for work.

**Nausea:** Mild nausea and even brief vomiting is not unexpected just after surgery. This can occur from a combination of many factors including anesthesia, postoperative medications, and swallowed blood. You should focus on remaining well hydrated. If vomiting persists, please call your doctor.

**Stitches/Splints:** You may have stitches and or splints in your nose. These are made to break down naturally following surgery. If they do, **DO NOT** pull on them as this will cause pain. If your stitches become visible you can leave them alone or get someone to cut them flush with the skin.

### WHAT TO DO

**Saline Irrigations:** These need to be started on the first day after surgery and are a must in the first four weeks after surgery. They will help remove clots and speed up the healing process. Starting on the first day after surgery, we recommend irrigating your nose at least 4 times a day. For best sinus penetration, use one full Neil-Med bottle (240ml) or equivalent three to four times a day with either the pre-mixed sachet or make up your own using ½ teaspoon of salt and pre-boiled, warm water. Irrigations should be forceful enough to dislodge any crusts, but should not be uncomfortable or painful.

**Diet:** You can eat and drink whatever you like after surgery however we recommend warm drinks/food that is not too hot, for the first few days to avoid precipitating bleeding.

**Activity:** Rest for the first week and avoid exercise. After one week you may increase your level of physical activity as you feel up to it. After two weeks there are no limitations.

**Medications** You may have been prescribed antibiotics, steroids, pain medications and irrigations. Take as recommended. If you have any questions call your Pharmacist, local doctor or contact Prof Tan's secretary for advice.

### FOLLOW UP

Please ensure you keep your follow up appointment with Prof Tan. At the first appointment he will suction the nose of all old clots and any dissolvable packing still in place. This can sometimes cause quite significant discomfort, so it is recommended that you take the strong pain relief 30 minutes before your appointment. You may need someone to drive you to your consultation.

### AVOID

To limit the chance of post-operative bleeding avoid lifting, straining, stooping over, exercise, blowing or picking your nose for the first 2 weeks after surgery.

### Please present to the nearest Emergency Department or Minor Injuries Unit should you develop;

- Brisk, new bleeding which doesn't stop after ten minutes of sitting up and squeezing your nostrils together
- Fever (greater than 38.5 degrees degrees orally), chills, or shakes
- Swelling of the eye or decreased vision
- Unrelenting nausea and vomiting or unrelenting severe headache and intolerance of light

**Useful Contacts** Urgent Enquires Prof Tan's Secretary +44 7812095769 or email [Claire.bosustow1@nhs.net](mailto:Claire.bosustow1@nhs.net)