

INFORMED CONSENT - SEPTOPLASTY SURGERY

©2005 American Society of Plastic Surgeons®. Purchasers of the Patient Consultation Resource Book are given a limited license to modify documents contained herein and reproduce the modified version for use in the Purchaser's own practice only. All other rights are reserved by American Society of Plastic Surgeons®. Purchasers may not sell or allow any other party to use any version of the Patient Consultation Resource Book, any of the documents contained herein or any modified version of such documents.

INFORMED CONSENT - SEPTOPLASTY SURGERY

INSTRUCTIONS

This is an informed consent document that has been prepared to help inform you concerning septoplasty surgery, its risks, and alternative treatment.

It is important that you read this information carefully and completely. Please initial each page, indicating that you have read the page and sign the consent for surgery as proposed by your plastic surgeon and agreed upon by you.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Surgery of the nasal septum (septoplasty) is an operation frequently performed by plastic surgeons. This surgical procedure is performed to correct breathing problems caused by a distorted (deviated) nasal septum, which divides the nostrils. Septal deviation can interfere with the passage of air through the nose. Distorted cartilage and bone is selectively removed or straightened beneath the mucous membranes of the septum in order to improve nasal breathing. There are a number of techniques and approaches for septoplasty. Septoplasty can be performed in conjunction with other nasal surgeries (rhinoplasty) that reshape the external appearance of the nose.

A variety of conditions such as allergies, sinus disorders, nasal polyps, snoring problems, and breathing disorders from other causes may co-exist with a deviated nasal septum.

ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS

Alternative forms of treatment consist of not undergoing the septoplasty surgery. Certain internal nasal airway disorders may not require surgery and can be treated medically. Other forms of surgery may be indicated to treat breathing problems caused by other conditions. Risks and potential complications are associated with alternative forms of treatment that involve surgery to correct nasal-airway disorders.

RISKS OF SEPTOPLASTY 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 septoplasty surgery.

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 mucous membrane of the septum may delay healing and cause complications. Do not take any aspirin or anti-inflammatory medications for ten days 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. In extremely rare instances, life-threatening infections, including toxic shock syndrome have been noted after septoplasty surgery.

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 within the septum and nasal 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.

INFORMED CONSENT - SEPTOPLASTY SURGERY

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

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

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 upper mouth and teeth after septoplasty. The occurrence of this is not predictable. Diminished (or loss) of skin sensation in the nasal area may not totally resolve after septoplasty.

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

Delayed Healing- Wound disruption or delayed wound healing is possible. Some areas of the septum 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.**

Distortion in External Nasal Appearance- Distortion in the projection of the nose may result from a septoplasty. If this occurs, additional surgery would be necessary to correct this problem.

Residual Septal Distortion- It may not be possible to completely resolve distortions within the nasal septum with surgery.

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.

Skin Discoloration / Swelling- Some bruising and swelling normally occurs following septoplasty. 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 septoplasty. 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.

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.

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.

INFORMED CONSENT - SEPTOPLASTY SURGERY

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 septoplasty. The surgery may not improve your nasal breathing. The procedure may also interfere with normal nasal physiology, or result in structural malposition of the nasal septum. This would include risks such as asymmetry, loss of function, 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. If you experience shortness of breath, chest pains, or unusual heart beats, seek medical attention immediately. Should any of these complications occur, you may require hospitalization and additional treatment.

ADDITIONAL ADVISORIES

Skin Disorders / Skin Cancer- Skin disorders and skin cancer may occur independently of septoplasty.

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 septoplasty surgery. Future surgery or other treatments may be necessary.

Snoring Disorders- Snoring disorders may be caused by a variety of factors. Septoplasty may not relieve the propensity of some individuals to snore.

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 pulse or heart rate 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.

INFORMED CONSENT - SEPTOPLASTY SURGERY

Smoking, Second-Hand Smoke Exposure, Nicotine Products (Patch, Gum, Nasal Spray)-

Patients who are currently smoking, use tobacco products, or nicotine products (patch, gum, or nasal spray) are at a greater risk for significant surgical complications of skin dying, delayed healing, and additional scarring. Individuals exposed to second-hand smoke are also at potential risk for similar complications attributable to nicotine exposure. Additionally, smoking may have a significant negative effect on anesthesia and recovery from anesthesia, with coughing and possibly increased bleeding. Individuals who are not exposed to tobacco smoke or nicotine-containing products have a significantly lower risk of this type of complication. Please indicate your current status regarding these items below:

_____ I am a non-smoker and do not use nicotine products. I understand the risk of second-hand smoke exposure causing surgical complications.

_____ I am a smoker or use tobacco / nicotine products. I understand the risk of surgical complications due to smoking or use of nicotine products.

It is important to refrain from smoking at least 6 weeks before surgery and until your physician states it is safe to return, if desired.

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.

ADDITIONAL SURGERY NECESSARY

There are many variable conditions that may influence the long term result from septoplasty 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 septoplasty 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.

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 pulse or heart rate 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.

INFORMED CONSENT - SEPTOPLASTY SURGERY

HEALTH INSURANCE

If the septoplasty procedure corrects a breathing problem or marked septal deformity after a nasal injury, the procedure may be considered medically necessary by your health insurance company. Most health insurance companies exclude coverage for cosmetic surgical operations or any complications that might occur from cosmetic surgery. Please carefully review your health insurance subscriber-information pamphlet or contact your health insurance company if you have questions concerning insurance coverage for the septoplasty surgery. **Many insurance plans exclude coverage for secondary or revisionary surgery.**

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.

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 on the next page.

INFORMED CONSENT - SEPTOPLASTY SURGERY
CONSENT FOR SURGERY / PROCEDURE or TREATMENT

1. I hereby authorize Dr. _____ and such assistants as may be selected to perform the following procedure or treatment:

SEPTOPLASTY SURGERY

I have received the following information sheet:

INFORMED CONSENT – SEPTOPLASTY SURGERY

2. I recognize that during the course of the operation and medical treatment or anesthesia, unforeseen conditions may necessitate different procedures than those above. I therefore authorize the above physician and assistants or designees to perform such other procedures that are in the exercise of his or her professional judgment necessary and desirable. The authority granted under this paragraph shall include all conditions that require treatment and are not known to my physician at the time the procedure is begun.
3. I consent to the administration of such anesthetics considered necessary or advisable. I understand that all forms of anesthesia involve risk and the possibility of complications, injury, and sometimes death.
4. I acknowledge that no guarantee or representation has been given by anyone as to the results that may be obtained.
5. I consent to be photographed or televised before, during, and after the operation(s) or procedure(s) to be performed, including appropriate portions of my body, for medical, scientific or educational purposes, provided my identity is not revealed by the pictures.
6. For purposes of advancing medical education, I consent to the admittance of observers to the operating room.
7. I consent to the disposal of any tissue, medical devices or body parts which may be removed.
8. I consent to the utilization of blood products should they be deemed necessary by my surgeon and/or his/her appointees, and I am aware that there are potential significant risks to my health with their utilization.
9. I authorize the release of my Social Security number to appropriate agencies for legal reporting and medical-device registration, if applicable.
10. I understand that the surgeons' fees are separate from the anesthesia and hospital charges, and the fees are agreeable to me. If a secondary procedure is necessary, further expenditure will be required.
11. I realize that not having the operation is an option.
12. IT HAS BEEN EXPLAINED TO ME IN A WAY THAT I UNDERSTAND:
- a. THE ABOVE TREATMENT OR PROCEDURE TO BE UNDERTAKEN
 - b. THERE MAY BE ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES OR METHODS OF TREATMENT
 - c. THERE ARE RISKS TO THE PROCEDURE OR TREATMENT PROPOSED

I CONSENT TO THE TREATMENT OR PROCEDURE AND THE ABOVE LISTED ITEMS (1-12). I AM SATISFIED WITH THE EXPLANATION.

Patient or Person Authorized to Sign for Patient

Date _____ Witness _____