



MAO FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

/// JOHNNY MAO, MD, FACS

Functional Rhinoplasty

Rhinoplasty is one of the most common and one of the most complex procedures performed in facial plastic surgery. It can be purely to change the appearance of your nose (cosmetic), or to improve your breathing (functional), or a combination of both.

Most patients will be able to have their breathing improved and their appearance improved during the same procedure. For patients who have difficulty breathing through the nose, your surgeon will examine you and formulate a tailored plan to correct your breathing issues. During this time, we will likely discuss placing cartilage in the nose to reinforce the structure you already have. For patients who have had previous rhinoplasty surgery, or who have septal perforations, this may mean harvesting cartilage from one or both ears in order to have sufficient building material. Your surgeon will also discuss with you that your nose will ultimately be approximately 10-15% wider than what it is now in order to improve your breathing.

Most reconstructive or functional rhinoplasty surgeries will take around three hours. This may be longer, depending on the complexity of the surgery, particularly if you have already had a previous rhinoplasty. Most of our procedures are done in an out patient surgery center while you are asleep with a general anesthetic. This is the safest and most comfortable approach for you.

Typical recovery time is one to two weeks. Although you will be feeling well within the first couple of days you will have a cast on your nose for the first week. You may also have some bruising under the eyes which may take up to two weeks to resolve.

The following information serves as a guide for what to expect should you wish to proceed. Please try to follow these instructions as best as you can. Failure to do so may jeopardize your final result.

Before Your Surgery

1. Only take Extra Strength Tylenol* for aches and pains, starting at least 3 weeks before surgery. It is very important NOT to use any aspirin, aspirin containing compounds or non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (i.e. ibuprofen, Motrin*, Advil, Aleve, Celebrex etc). These all work by thinning your blood and can cause increased bleeding during surgery and increase bruising after surgery.
2. Do not take vitamin E supplements, fish oils, omega-3 supplements, or herbal supplements such as garlic, ginkgo, or ginseng for at least three weeks prior to surgery. These supplements may also increase the likelihood of bleeding and bruising. A prepackaged multivitamin product (such as One-A-Day• or Centrum') is fine, but do not add any of the above supplements.
3. If you are on a blood thinner like Coumadin* (Warfarin) you must let your surgeon know. He/she will have you speak to your primary care doctor about managing this prior to your surgery.
4. Avoid alcoholic beverages the night before surgery.
5. You will be taking antibiotics and pain medicine after your surgery. It is helpful to have picked those up from the pharmacy prior to the day of surgery, so you won't have to be bothered with it that day. The surgeon will write both prescriptions for you, or they will be called into your pharmacy by the office. You should also purchase nasal saline spray, and ointment (Aquaphor) which you will use after your surgery.
6. You will always have at least two postoperative appointments - these will be set up ahead of time.
 - a. Five days after surgery, the nasal packing inside your nose will be removed.
 - b. Your nasal cast/splint will be taken off, and any stitches you may have will be removed at that appointment as well.
7. You should not smoke or use nicotine substitutes for one month prior to surgery. Smoking cigarettes and/or using nicotine substitutes impairs healing, may cause postoperative complications, and may affect your postoperative results.



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On the *Day* of Surgery

1. Wear something that is easy to get on and off, such as a button down or zippered shirt which you do not have to pull over your head.
2. Make sure you have someone to drive you home.
3. It is strongly recommended that you have someone with you at home the first night after surgery.

Immediately After Surgery

1. You will not be able to breathe through your nose at all -there will be packing inside your nose to minimize bleeding and swelling. Your mouth and throat may feel sore and dry since you have to breathe only through your mouth.
2. Change the mustache dressing/gauze pad that's under your nose as needed overnight. The drainage will slow down overnight.
3. Keep the nasal splint/cast in place, and make sure to keep it dry.
4. Sleep with your head elevated on at least, three pillows. This will minimize swelling around your eyes and nose.
5. Place an icepack over your eyes for the first 24 hour after surgery (remembering to keep your nasal cast dry!). This will minimize the bruising and swelling you will get around your eyes.

After Surgery

1. Once the nasal packing is removed, you should start to use a nasal saline spray {generic or Ocean Nasal Spray, Ayr etc.) three times a day. This is used to rinse out the inside of your nose and remove any old blood or mucus. Since you should NOT blow your nose during the first month after surgery.
2. Your surgeon may tell you to use a Q-Tip with antibiotic ointment to clean the inside of your nostrils. Do this if instructed.
3. Your surgeon may tell you to apply antibiotic ointment over any external stitches you have.
4. Do NOT blow your nose until instructed that this is okay.
5. Try to sneeze with your mouth open. Afterward, gently dab around your nose with a tissue. Any aggressive cleaning or blowing of your nose can damage your results.
6. Keep the nasal splint/cast dry for the next *seven* days.
7. Try to adhere to a low-salt diet. Salty foods may increase swelling in your nose and prolong recovery.
8. Avoid taking alcoholic beverages while taking your antibiotics.
9. Avoid any extreme physical activity for at least one week after surgery. This includes working out, bending over, heavy lifting or straining.
10. Keep your head elevated for at least the first five days after surgery.
11. It is okay to wash your hair as long as you keep the plastic splint/cast dry. People have used plastic bags or cling wrap to cover their cast in the shower. If you do happen to get it wet, use a hairdryer 10 dry it immediately.
12. Avoid shirts with crewnecks or turtlenecks for one week. Try to wear loose clothing with buttons or zippers that do not have to go over your head. Any inadvertent bumps could affect your final result.
13. Depending on the amount of swelling you have, it may be difficult to put your contact lenses in. You may wear glasses while you have the cast on, but they may need to be taped to your forehead for stability.
14. You should not smoke or use nicotine substitutes for one month after surgery. Smoking cigarettes and/or using nicotine substitutes impairs healing, may cause postoperative complications, and may affect your postoperative results.



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After the Cast is Removed

1. Your nose will be very swollen after the case is removed. Do not be concerned by any irregularities of swelling or skin discoloration immediately after the cast is removed. We expect significant swelling. This will resolve.
2. The ability to breathe through your nose will fluctuate after surgery. Some days will be better than others, but it will continually improve as the swelling on the inside of your nose resolves.
3. Your nasal skin may be oily, and your pores may be clogged after the tape and cast come off. It is okay to gently wash your face with your usual facial soap or cleansing creams. Alcohol pads (bought from the local pharmacy) will also help remove residual adhesive, and help dry out your skin.
4. Do NOT get a facial or use exfoliants or home skin care products with abrasives until your surgeon gives you permission. Early manipulation of your nose may cause damage.
5. Over the first and second week after surgery, the internal dissolvable stitches will start to resorb. Do not be alarmed if, when you sneeze, small portions of the stitches are visible.
6. Do not wear heavy sunglasses for at least one month after surgery. If you have questions, bring the pair of glasses into the office during one of your postoperative visits. Your surgeon will let you know if they are acceptable. You may need to tape them to your forehead to avoid pressure on the bridge of your nose. You should be able to wear your contacts three to five days after surgery.
7. Avoid getting a sunburn. You should use at least SPF 30 on your entire face every day to prevent sun damage, anyway. However, a sunburn causes swelling in the skin, which could prolong the healing phase.
8. You should not swim in a chlorine pool for at least two weeks after surgery, and should not swim in lake or ocean water for one to two months after surgery.