**Post-Operative Instructions: Functional Endoscopic Sinus Surgery (FESS)**

**Introduction:** Although you have had the most advanced and least invasive sinus procedure available today, it is not uncommon to experience some post-operative discomfort. The most common questions are addressed below.

**General:** It is common to feel tired after general anesthesia and sinus surgery for up to 10 days post-operatively. DO NOT overdue it, increase your activity level gradually. Slight bleeding is expected after surgery and can last up to 10 days. Brisk bleeding that does not stop should be reported to your doctor. If you are experiencing a nosebleed place your head down and pinch your nostrils for 20 minutes. Irrigations (saline rinsing/washing) will result in significant clots and debris being washed out of your sinus cavities. Clear drainage several hours after irrigations is common and will typically come out at the worst possible moments. Low grade temperatures are common after general anesthesia, however, if your temperature is greater than 101.5 degrees F., report this to your doctor. Patients routinely experience pain and pressure between or above the eyes. For patients who have also had a Septoplasty, stents used in the nose make it difficult to breathe until they are removed at the first post-operative appointment. If you feel it is difficult to get air through your nose after surgery, Afrin (oxymetazoline) or Neosynephrine nasal spray can be used at night for up to 3 consecutive days. These medications are addictive and must be discontinued after 3 days.

**Medications:**Your doctor will prescribe strong pain medicines (narcotics) for pain control after surgery. The majority of patients require pain relief for up to 7 days after surgery. To wean off of the narcotics, slowly substitute Tylenol for pain relief. An antibiotic may be prescribed.

**NO ASPIRIN, IBUPROFEN OR OTHER NON-STEROIAL ANTI-IMPLAMMATORY PAIN RELIEVERS FOR 2 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY**

**Activity/Restrictions and Recovery Period/Healing:** Increase your activity gradually over the next two weeks. Running errands or light work is allowed. Gentle nose blowing is allowed and sneeze with your mouth open. You do not need to wear a mask during the recovery period. No heavy lifting greater than 20 lbs. for the next two weeks. No aerobic exercise until after the completion of the first post-operative appointment. No swimming or chlorine pool exposure until two weeks after surgery. No driving or operating machinery while on the narcotic medicines. No flying for two weeks after surgery. We routinely recommend 10 to 14 days off work. The majority of patients feel well enough to return to work within 7 to 10 days.

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**Saltwater Rinse for the Nose (Buffered Hypertonic Saline Nasal Irrigations):**

Irrigation work by clearing out debris and crusting from the nose and sinuses. Studies show that this mixture helps the nose work better and move mucous out of the nose faster. Irrigations will prevent scar tissue from forming and decrease the amount of discomfort with the first post-operative debridement.

Start with sterile, distilled, or boiled water; **DO NOT USE TAP WATER**. We recommend using Neil Med Saline Sinus Rinse Kit (found at your pharmacy) or you may make your own recipe.

**Irrigation recipe**: 1. Mix two heaping teaspoons of salt (we recommend using a pure salt such as canning, pickling, or kosher salt; do not use iodized table salt) and one teaspoon of baking soda (Arm& Hammer standard baking soda is acceptable) in a quart of distilled or boiled water. Some patients choose to mix an entire gallon using 8 teaspoons of salt with 4 teaspoons of baking soda in a gallon of distilled or boiled water. (If you experience any burning with the recommendation concentration, decrease the amount of salt to one teaspoon per quart of water).

**Irrigation Instructions**: Use the irrigation syringe, water pik or bottle over the sink or in the shower (head down and mouth open) by gently placing it in one nostril and using a strong spray in the nose. If done properly, it will come out of the other nostril and mouth. Then switch to the other nostril and do the same. Some patients prefer to warm the solution to body temperature in the microwave prior to use. Try to avoid swallowing the saltwater rinse. Use 8 ounces per side three to four times daily. This is the minimum. If it helps keep your nose open, you can irrigate more frequently. Irrigations three times daily are required for the first 4 weeks after surgery, then once daily for another 4 weeks.

**Post-Operative Visits:** In order to obtain a satisfactory result, post-operative visits are essential. If scar tissue begins to form, this can be dealt with at your routine post-operative visits. You will have

two to four visits after surgery or more depending on the type of sinus disease. If you have not scheduled your first visit, please contact the surgery scheduler at (702) 792-6700.