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SINUSES

Location: The sinuses are areas located beneath the eyes (called maxillary) and between the eyes (called ethmoid). There is also a frontal sinus located just above the eyes in the lower forehead.

Function: The sinuses act to produce mucus which is sent to the inside of the nose. The mucus leaves the sinuses through small openings.

Problems with function: If the openings of the sinuses get blocked (can be caused by swelling of the lining tissue near these openings), infection and damage to the sinus lining can occur. If this occurs over a long time period (called chronic), surgery may be necessary to open and drain infection and remove portions of the damaged lining. Polyps are swellings of the lining and can cause nasal blockage and sinus problems. If medicines cannot improve the changes in the sinuses, surgery is usually needed.

Endoscopic Sinus Surgery

This type of surgery uses small telescopes to look into the openings of the sinuses and remove infected lining. It is safest when the disease in the sinuses is not excessive and polyps are few. The natural openings of the sinuses may be enlarged during surgery.

Surgery is performed usually under local anesthesia with additional sedation. Some patients may need general anesthesia. Patients are admitted the same day as surgery and often can be discharged the same day, or the morning after surgery.

After surgery patients need to return to the office several times for cleaning of the surgical area. This can be a small surgical procedure and is important for long term improved outcome.

Complications: Problems with Sinus Surgery

Bleeding occurs with all sinus surgery. Sometimes packing is needed to control bleeding. This packing may remain in place several days.

Repeat sinus surgery. Endoscopic surgery is effective in about 85% of cases. Some patients may need further surgery for recurrent or persistent disease.

Damaged vision can be caused by swelling near the eye or direct damage to the eye or nerve damage. This is very rare and occurs in less than one out of 100 cases. This could be permanent.

Leak of fluid around brain. This is even more rare. It occurs because of the closeness of the sinuses to the lining around the brain. This can lead to meningitis - infection in the fluid near the brain. Repair requires further more extensive surgery.

Cheek numbness occurs in about one of every ten patients who have incisions over the gums. This usually improves after about one year.

PATIENT INSTRUCTION SHEET (PAGE 2)
Sinus Surgery

(Please keep and review immediately after surgery)

Post-Operatively

1. Take prescribed medicine.
2. **No** nose blowing until after the first post-op visit.
3. **No** bending over or lifting objects over 15lbs. until after the first post-op visit, keep head elevated.
4. Use saline nasal spray every 1 or 2 hours: begin the day after surgery when no more bright red blood is draining. This is available over the counter.
5. Sneeze with your mouth open.
6. No travel unless discussed with your physician.
7. No swimming. May shower and wash hair in shower (not in sink) - keep water away from nose.
8. Absolutely **NO** aspirin, Advil or other pain medicines except those prescribed or regular Tylenol.
9. Schedule a follow up appointment 10-14 days after surgery.
10. Use the drip pad for 1-2 days as needed (it helps remind you not to blow your nose.)
11. Sleep sitting up (about 30° -45°) for 5 days after surgery.
12. Patients should sit near upright for several days post surgery- a recliner would be ideal. This decreases chances for bleeding and helps reduce congestion somewhat.
13. Gelatin dissolvable stents are placed in the surgical area to help keep the area open as it heals. This will dissolve but are usually removed at the first post-op visit. If they come out on their own, you should notify the office. They appear like clear rolled sheets of plastic-looking material.

If bleeding does occur:

- sit up straight in a chair
- tilt your nose slightly down toward the floor
- pinch the front of your nose closed so that no air or blood can come out. Continue this for **10** minutes without stopping. If you continue to have bleeding at this time, call the office immediately.