



## PATIENT INFORMATION

# Frequently Asked Questions: Rhinoplasty Patient Pain Management & Discomfort

### QUESTION

### ANSWER

How much pain should I expect?

The amount of pain is variable, but most patients state that it is minimal to moderate.

How long after surgery will my nose hurt?

Pain at any intensity will usually last for only 36 to 72 hours, but may last longer if the nose is manipulated or bumped. Your nose may remain tender or sensitive to touch, however, for up to three months.

How should I manage my pain?

There are numerous ways to reduce pain:

1. Use acetaminophen and other pain medications prescribed by your physician;
2. Consider a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug such as ibuprofen after consulting with your physician;
3. Apply cold compresses or ice packs to the cheeks;
4. Ask your doctor about head positioning and nasal hygiene;
5. Avoid exertion.

When should I call the clinician for persistent pain?

Call your doctor if pain is not relieved by medications, if pain is getting worse (instead of gradually better), or if pain persists at a moderate to severe level for more than 48 hours after surgery.

What pain medications am I allowed to use?

Acetaminophen is acceptable, but check with your doctor about ibuprofen or other medications. Homeopathic preparations (e.g., Arnica montana) can have side effects that interfere with healing, so do not use them unless specifically approved by your doctor.

What can my surgeon do to minimize pain during surgery?

Surgeons frequently use local anesthetics during surgery to reduce pain in the recovery room. Some surgeons may administer intravenous steroids during surgery in an effort to reduce pain and swelling.

**SOURCE:** Ishii LE, Tollefson TT, Basura GJ, et al. Clinical Practice Guideline: Improving Nasal Form and Function after Rhinoplasty. *Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg.* 2017; 156(2\_suppl):s1-s30.



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#### ABOUT THE AAO-HNS/F

The American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery ([www.entnet.org](http://www.entnet.org)), one of the oldest medical associations in the nation, represents about 12,000 physicians and allied health professionals who specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the ears, nose, throat and related structures of the head and neck. The Academy serves its members by facilitating the advancement of the science and art of medicine related to otolaryngology and by representing the specialty in governmental and socioeconomic issues. The AAO-HNS Foundation works to advance the art, science, and ethical practice of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery through education, research, and lifelong learning. The organization's vision: "Empowering otolaryngology-head and neck surgeons to deliver the best patient care."