Nasal Surgery

In *People* magazine, there are often pictures of movie stars who have had appearance-changing nasal surgery. In addition, many people are familiar with the phrase: 'deviated septum,' though most people may be unsure of its definition. Certainly, there are many kinds of nasal surgery, and each has its own goal, process, and outcome.

While nasal surgery *can* be performed solely to change the appearance of a nose, nasal surgery is *often* performed to improve the function of the nose. Many people have structural abnormalities, such as a deviated septum, which hinder their ability to breath, through their nose during the day, during exercise , and during sleep. (The septum is the wall of cartilage and bone, which separates the two sides of the nasal passageway. A septum that is deviated can both distort the shape of the nose in addition to blocking a patient's nasal airway.)

It is important to realize that different nasal surgeries can have different intentions and, therefore different results. Naturally, the surgeon and the patient must have carefully discussed the intended goals of a nasal surgery prior to the procedure. Some procedures intend to change appearance, some aim to improve function, while some surgeries can do both. A nasal surgery that changes the external structure and outward appearance of the nose should be referred to as a rhinoplasty. A nasal surgery that only intends to change the shape of the septum, should only be referred to as a septoplasty. Not all rhinoplasty surgeries are performed for purely cosmetic purposes. Rhinoplasty can be a restorative procedure after a significant traumatic injury and in certain circumstances rhinoplasty techniques can be applied to improve nasal breathing. Sometimes a patient may undergo a nasal procedure which includes both rhinoplasty and septoplasty. Sometimes a septoplasty needs to be performed in order to achieve the desired results during rhinoplasty. While these details and descriptions may have become somewhat confusing, one can summarize these statements by remembering that not all nasal surgery is the same.

Nasal surgery is commonly regarded by surgeons as the most difficult and challenging of all plastic surgery procedures. While such procedures involve a series of complicated tasks, the process should not be all that difficult for the patient. Though all patients have different experiences after similar surgeries, nasal surgery *should not be that bad of an experience.* If a patient has been particularly uncomfortable after nasal surgery, chances are their nose was “packed” at the end of the procedure. Fortunately, not all noses need to be “packed” after surgery, and some surgeons do not “pack” the nose at all after their procedures. Usual 'down-time' after nasal surgery is one week. Like all surgeries, rhinoplasty certainly comes with some degree of bruising and swelling; however, bruising and swelling can usually be kept to a minimum. After the first week, while healing is still taking place, a patient can return to most of their normal day-to-day activities.

Every year, over half a million people seek consultations with facial plastic surgeons to discuss nasal surgery. During this discussion, a patient should share their interests and concerns and a surgeon can offer their professional advice and recommendations. Whatever the reason for having surgery on the nose, such procedures can be life-changing experiences.

This article is meant to educate and inform about some of the details regarding the field of nasal surgery. For more information on nasal surgery, visit the American Academy of Facial Plastic and

Reconstructive Surgery's website at: http://www.aafprs.org/patient/procedures/rhinoplasty.html or call to schedule a consultation with Dr. Scurry at (336)-747-3737.

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