

# Information for patients

## Rhinoplasty, septoplasty, turbinectomy

### What is a rhinoplasty?

Rhinoplasty is surgery to repair or reshape the nose. It may be performed to change the size of the nose, change the shape of the nose, narrow the nostrils and/or change the angle between the nose and the lips.

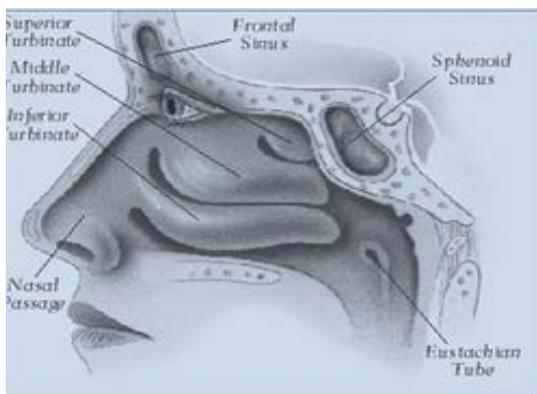
This surgery involves the re-sculpting of the bone and cartilage of the nose, which can improve the appearance and/or function of your nose.

### What is a septoplasty?

Septoplasty is surgery to remove sections of cartilage from the nasal septum (the wall in between your nostrils). The purpose is to have both nostrils of equal size to provide a clear airway for easier breathing.

### What is a turbinectomy?

Turbinectomy is surgery to remove the turbinate bones, which act as drainage passages for the sinuses to relieve pressure on the floor of the nose.



### What happens before my surgery?

Before surgery, some patients attend a pre-admission clinic where the doctor will explain the surgery and you will sign a consent form.

At the clinic, the health care team will ask you about your health, medication and lifestyle. They may test your blood, take x-rays and an electrocardiogram (ECG).

Your doctor will talk to you about what medications to take before you come to hospital.

It is important to tell your doctor if you are taking any blood thinning medications, such as aspirin, warfarin or clopidogrel (Plavix).

Please bring your medications into hospital with you.

If you use a dosette box or pill organiser to take your tablets, please ask your pharmacist to print out a list of your current medications so you can bring this to hospital.

If you do not need to attend the pre-admission clinic, we will telephone you to tell you when your surgery is scheduled and what to bring to hospital. You may also receive a letter informing you of your time and date of surgery. Please make sure you confirm your date for surgery.

The day before your surgery, the hospital will call you between 2.30pm and 7pm to inform you of the time you need to stop eating and drinking and what time to come to hospital.

### What will happen on the day of my surgery?

We ask that you shower before you come into hospital and remove jewellery, make up, nail polish and fake nails. It is advised that you leave valuables such as jewellery and large sums of money at home to decrease the possibility of items being misplaced or stolen.

On the day of your surgery please make your way to the St Vincent's Day of Surgery Admission (DOSA) area, which is located on the first floor of the In-patient Services Building, Princes Street, Fitzroy.

When you arrive the nursing staff will check your pulse and blood pressure.

You will need an anaesthetic for your surgery. The anaesthetist (the doctor who will give you the anaesthetic) will meet with you before your surgery to talk to you about your health and the best type of anaesthetic for you.

A general anaesthetic (anaesthetic to put you to sleep) is normally used for this procedure.

St Vincent's is a busy hospital so please be aware that you may need to wait up to three hours for your operation.

### What happens during the surgery?

#### Septoplasty/turbinectomy

This operation is usually done from inside the nose. A small cut is made in the septum (the wall in between your nostrils). The crooked parts are straightened and/or removed. The turbinate bones are also removed. The nose is usually packed with gauze to stop small amounts of bleeding. This procedure takes approximately 20 minutes.

#### Rhinoplasty

This operation can either be done entirely from inside the nose (leaving no visible scars), or from the outside.

If the operation is done from the outside of your nose, the skin between your nostrils will be cut. Once this scar heals it is usually difficult to see.

Your surgeon will advise you which is the best technique to use in your individual case.

You will have a small plaster placed on your nose to help keep the nose straight. This type of surgery may take one to three hours, depending on how much of the nose needs to be altered.

### What happens after the surgery?

You will wake up from the anaesthetic in the recovery room, and be transferred to your ward shortly after. A nurse will monitor your blood pressure, pulse, temperature and oxygen levels regularly.

You may have an oxygen mask to help you breathe and an intravenous (IV) drip in your arm giving you fluid. This will be removed once you are able to eat and drink. You will not be permitted to eat and drink until four hours after surgery. This is because you may feel sick or vomit.

Your pain may be treated in a number of ways. This will be decided by you, your doctors and nurses depending on the type of pain you have. You may be given tablets or an injection to help you feel better.

There will be a pack of bandages inside your nose for the first 24 hours after your surgery, so you will need to breathe through your mouth. You may also experience some pressure-type pain in your nose.

The morning after your surgery your doctor will remove your nasal packs. You will be required to wait a few hours before going home so the nurses can monitor any bleeding from your nose.

If you had a rhinoplasty, you will have a small plaster

on your nose and you may have bruised and swollen eyes. The doctor will remove the plaster from your nose after seven days.

### When can I go home?

You will be required to stay in hospital for one night and will be able to go home the morning after your operation. Patients are usually discharged at 10am so the room can be prepared for another patient.

Before you leave the ward someone will:

- make a follow-up appointment at St Vincent's Specialist Clinics for you
- send a letter to your local doctor (GP)
- give you medication, if the doctor prescribes it
- give you a medical certificate if needed (you will need to ask).

Please remember to take all your belongings including x-rays home with you.

### What should I do once I get home?

Your doctor may recommend one week off work after the operation to give your body the best chance of recovery.

You should avoid doing any strenuous activity, especially lifting anything heavy. Do not lift anything more than 2-3kg for two weeks after surgery (this equals the weight of a bag of oranges).

You should avoid having hot showers and hot food for seven to ten days after the operation as this may cause bleeding. Smoking is not advised.

There is a small possibility of bleeding from your nose or the back of your throat for seven to ten days after surgery. If you cannot stop the bleeding by applying ice to the back of your neck you will need to go to the nearest emergency department as soon as possible.

### Contacts

#### Liaison Nurse

Tel: 9288 2755

#### Waiting List Officer

Tel: 9288 2271

This information sheet is intended as a guideline only. If you have further questions or concerns, please speak to your doctor.