

RHINOPLASTY

By Dr. Jason Hall, MD FACS

Rhinoplasty is one of the most popular cosmetic plastic surgery procedures in America.

If you are considering rhinoplasty (for either cosmetic reasons or breathing issues), here are three things to be aware of that do not get discussed as often as they should.

Swelling

There is no way around it: If you have a rhinoplasty, your nose is going to swell.

Depending on exactly what is done, this swelling can be more or less severe. A good rule of thumb is that it will take a full year for the swelling from a rhinoplasty to completely resolve. However, in about 2-3 weeks, it won't look like you've had an operation.

After that, the swelling from rhinoplasty surgery will be swelling that you can FEEL but is difficult to SEE. Your nose, especially the tip, will feel very firm and numb for most of the first year (for open rhinoplasty patients). You will gradually notice the swelling start to resolve first at your bridge (around 3 months), then the middle part of your nose (6-9 months), and finally at the tip (1 year or so).

A “weird” feeling when you look in the mirror

Having any facial surgery can make looking in the mirror strange for the first few weeks after surgery. Our face is a key piece of our identity. Changing it, especially if it is a significant change from before surgery, can mess with your head.

A change in your facial features makes the "you" that you see in the mirror a different person from the "you" you think you are. This is normal, and it simply takes a few weeks for you to adjust to your new appearance.

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During that time, it is not unusual for patients to feel uneasy with their appearance or even to regret surgery. Do not despair! This feeling will pass and you will ultimately be thrilled that you chose to have rhinoplasty surgery as your perception of yourself shifts to match the person you see in the mirror.

Not being able to wear glasses/sunglasses for a few weeks

Many rhinoplasty surgeries require something called an osteotomy. This is where the nasal bones are cut and moved into different positions - either to narrow them or to correct deviations.

A temporary splint is applied for the first week to hold these bones in place and allow them to start healing (similar to casting a broken arm). However, once the splint is removed, the bones are not completely healed and can be moved.

Resist the urge to want to wear glasses or sunglasses as soon as your cast comes off. Slight pressure, when applied over time, can cause the bones to shift as they heal, which can cause the need for revision surgery. If you wear glasses, try and get by with contact lenses during recovery, and wear wide-brimmed hats instead of sunglasses. This only lasts 4-6 weeks, and is a small price to pay to allow things to heal in the position they were placed during your operation!

Rhinoplasty surgery is a great way to improve the appearance of your nose and face! The results can be life changing, especially if you've always disliked your nose.

If you have any questions about rhinoplasty surgery or recovery, please contact Caroline, my patient coordinator, at **(865) 999-5308**.



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