

**Mr Stephen Tudge** MBBS, MS, FRACS  
Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery

## Information Regarding Septoplasty, and Reduction of inferior turbinates

### What is it?

Correction of the position of the central nasal cartilage (the septum) and reduction of the cushions of tissue at the sides of the nasal airways (the turbinates).

### Reasons for having the operation

Nasal obstruction  
Snoring  
Recurrent bleeding

### Results

Overall results are very good for improving the nasal airway (95+ %). In a small number of patients the cartilage may gradually return to its pre-operative position and require a second operation. Allergic symptoms, such as sneezing and congestion may not be improved with surgery and specific allergy treatment may be required.

### Nature of the operation

You will be admitted to hospital on the day of surgery  
The operation is done under general anaesthetic  
The operation normally takes about 1 hour, and is done through the nostrils.  
There are no external cuts or bruises.  
Usually you will have a dressing placed in the nose that dissolves with time, but occasionally a more comprehensive nasal dressing is required that is removed the next day.  
Usually you will go home on the same day of surgery if there are no problems after 4 hours. If there are concerns, you may need to stay the night.

### Side-effects and Risks

Pain. You should not experience more than moderate discomfort after this operation.



**Bleeding.** It is normal to get blood stained secretions for the first 2 weeks. Heavy bleeding is uncommon and you should proceed directly to the emergency department if this occurs.

**Infection.** There is a small risk of infection, which needs prompt treatment. Any increasing pain or fever should be reported to me as soon as possible.

**Septal Perforation.** There is a small risk (1%) of causing a hole in the cartilage from one side of the nose to the other. Occasionally this may then whistle or bleed and require ongoing treatment.

**Change in sense of smell.** There is a small risk (<1%) of your sense of smell being altered following surgery, which may be permanent.

**Dental sensation.** Occasionally (2-3%) some numbness around the upper central teeth is noted after surgery. This will usually resolve over some months, but there is a possibility it may be permanent. It will not affect the appearance or viability of your teeth.

**Dry nose.** The turbinates help to moisturize the nose and trimming them may cause some dryness. In rare situations, this is an ongoing problem.

# Post-operative Information

## Crusting

It is usual to get scabbing and crusting in the nose for the first 2 weeks. You will be given some saline spray/solution to use to help clear the nose. Nose blowing should be avoided in the first 2 weeks as this may cause bleeding.

## Bleeding

It is recommended that strenuous activity be avoided for the first 2 weeks. Showers should be warm, not hot. Do not travel more than 1 hour away from health care facilities in this time.

If some bleeding does occur, sit up and suck on some ice.

If bleeding is persistent (longer than 5-10 minutes) or severe you should contact me on my pager and go straight to hospital.

## Pain

Any increase in pain should be reported to me promptly. Simple analgaesics such as paracetamol should be adequate.

## Check-up

An appointment should be made to see me in my office 2 weeks following surgery. Any ongoing concerns may be discussed then.

## Time off Work / School

3-14 days is usually required, depending on the type of work. A work certificate will be provided at your post-operative visit as required.

