



SAINT JAMES
HOSPITAL

Rhinoplasty – Patient Information

Rhinoplasty (sometimes called a nose job) is an operation to change the shape or size of the nose. Rhinoplasty is a complex operation. The results cannot be guaranteed and there are risks to consider.

What does a Rhinoplasty surgery involve?

Nose reshaping is usually carried out under general anaesthetic.

Depending on the type of surgery you're having, the surgeon may:

- Make your nose smaller (nose reduction) – by removing some of the cartilage and bone
- Make your nose larger (nose augmentation) – by taking cartilage from the ears and bone from the hips, elbow or skull, and using it to build up the nose (known as a "graft")
- Change the shape of your nose (including the nostrils) – by breaking the nose bone and rearranging the cartilage
- Change the angle between the nose and top lip

The surgeon will need to know if you are taking any medication that thin the blood such as aspirin, clopidogrel, warfarin or rivaroxaban or medicines that reduce your immunity or ability to heal.

The skin over the nose should shrink or expand to its new shape.

The operation involves either making a cut across the skin between the nostrils (open rhinoplasty), or tiny cuts inside the nostrils (closed rhinoplasty).

A closed rhinoplasty leaves no visible scars and causes less swelling but is not always possible or available.

The procedure can take 1.5 to 3 hours. You may need to stay in hospital for 1 night.

You'll have a dressing (bolster) on your nose for up to 2 days after the surgery and your nose might be packed for 1 day. You may not be able to breathe through your nose for about a week.

You'll be given painkillers to help control any pain or discomfort.

What can I expect after a Rhinoplasty surgery?

You may need to take up to 2 weeks off work to recover from nose surgery.

You will be advised not to wear glasses for 6 weeks.

It might be several months, or up to a year before you see the full effect of the operation, and up to a year for the swelling to completely go.

After about a week: Stitches can be removed (unless you had dissolvable stitches). The splint may also be able to come off.

At 3 weeks: Bruises, swelling and redness may have faded. You may be able to swim.

At 4 to 6 weeks: You should be able to resume strenuous exercise.

You may be advised to:

- Prop your head up with pillows for a couple of days when resting to reduce the swelling
- Avoid hot baths and getting the splint wet
- Avoid blowing your nose or removing any crusts until your appointment to have the splint removed
- Sneeze through your mouth to avoid pressure on your nose
- Avoid dusty or smoky places
- Avoid strenuous exercise or contact sports for 4 to 6 weeks

It's common after nose reshaping to have:

- A blocked nose – you'll need to breathe through your mouth for a week or so



SAINT JAMES
HOSPITAL

- A stiff and numb nose
- Soreness, swelling and bruising around the eyes, which can last 3 - 4 weeks
- Light nosebleeds for the first few days

What can happen following a Rhinoplasty surgery?

Nose reshaping surgery can occasionally result in:

- Permanent breathing difficulty
- Damage to the cartilage wall between your nostrils
- An altered sense of smell
- Heavy nosebleeds
- Overgrowth of subcutaneous scar tissue around the tip may require steroid injections

Any type of operation also carries a small risk of:

- Excessive bleeding
- A blood clot in a vein
- Infection
- An allergic reaction to the anaesthetic

Your surgeon should explain how likely these risks and complications are, and how they would be treated if you have them.

Smoking and Surgical Risks

Smoking increases the risk of complications both during and after cosmetic surgery.

Chemicals in cigarettes restrict blood vessels and reduce the amount of oxygen carried in your blood. This can affect your safety during the operation and your healing afterwards.

Risks During Surgery

Smoking can lead to:

- Reduced oxygen delivery to tissues, making the procedure riskier
- Higher risk of anaesthetic complications, including breathing difficulties
- Poor blood flow, which can affect the body's ability to tolerate the surgery
- Increased risk of skin and tissue damage during procedures that rely on good circulation

Risks After Surgery

Smoking also significantly increases the risk of:

- Delayed wound healing
- Infection at the surgical site
- Poor scarring or widened scars
- Skin or tissue loss (necrosis), especially in procedures involving skin flaps

To reduce these risks, patients are strongly **advised to stop smoking (including e-cigarettes and nicotine-containing products) for at least 6 weeks before and after surgery.** Quitting allows your circulation and oxygen levels to improve, supporting safer surgery and better healing.



SAINT JAMES
HOSPITAL

What if I have concerns?

You should contact the ER or the ward, as instructed prior to discharge if you have severe pain or unexpected symptoms.

Cosmetic surgery results may not always meet your expectations. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can discuss this with your surgeon.