

## Useful Telephone Numbers

- ENT Department, Lister Hospital  
Telephone: 01438 314333, Ext. 5113 / 4118
- ENT Admission Office (waiting list)  
Telephone: 01438 286836 or 01438 286835
- ENT Nurse Specialist (Monday to Friday, 8.30am - 6pm)  
Telephone: 01438 314333, bleep 1028  
Mobile: 0778 534 3359 or 0787 639 0290

Useful ENT website: [www.entuk.org](http://www.entuk.org)

### In an emergency:

**Dial 999 and request an ambulance or attend the nearest A&E of the following hospitals unless away from home**

- Lister Hospital A&E (SG1 4AB) ☎ 01438 784732
- New QEII Urgent Care Centre, Welwyn Garden City ☎ 01707 247549
- Luton and Dunstable
- Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow

[www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk)

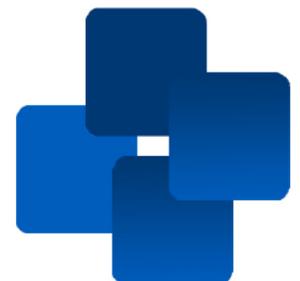
You can request this information in a different format or another language.

Date of publication: April 2014  
Author: L. Delfin  
Reference: ENT05      Version: 06 (Nov 2018)  
Review Date: October 2021  
© East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

## Patient Information

### Septoplasty

### Ears, Nose and Throat Department



## Indications

The nasal septum is a thin piece of cartilage that separates each side of the nose internally. Normally it is straight, however, it can be bent naturally during growth or it may become damaged by an injury to the nose.



If the septum is deviated then this may result in a blockage in either one or both sides of the nose and breathing through the nose may become difficult. Surgery on the nasal septum involves performing a **septoplasty**.

## Anaesthetic

This operation is performed under a general anaesthetic (whilst asleep).

## Technique

A septoplasty is performed to reposition the septum within the nose. The operation is performed entirely within the nose and there are no external cuts made to the face.

Following the operation, packs are placed in the nose to prevent any bleeding.

## Length of operation

The operation normally takes between 30-45 minutes.

## Time in hospital

The packs in the nose are normally removed a few hours after the operation, or sometimes, the morning after surgery. This will always cause some bleeding. This should cease within 30 minutes. Patients can then be discharged the same day.

## Post-operative discomfort and time off work

The most uncomfortable period is when the packs are in place, although removal of the packs also causes some discomfort. Simple pain relief will be adequate. Most people require 10-14 days off work following this type of operation.

## Risks and complications

Complications are rare.

- Occasionally, the bleeding persists following removal of the packs. Should this occur, repacking of the nose might be required.

- An infection may develop in the nose following the operation. This will be characterised by increasing pain, a nasal discharge and a temperature (fever). Antibiotics may be required.
- Rarely, the operation may leave you with a hole in the septum inside the nose going from one side of your nose to the other. This can cause a whistling sound/noise when you breathe, nasal crusting with blockage or nosebleeds. Most of the time it causes no problems at all and needs no treatment. Further surgery can be carried out, if necessary, to repair a hole in the septum.
- Very rarely, patients may have some numbness of the teeth. This usually settles with time.
- Sometimes a patient might find that the shape of the nose has changed slightly, with a dip in the bridge of nose. Most people do not notice any change but, if you are not happy with it, it can be fixed with further surgery.

## Follow-up appointment

A follow-up will be arranged in approximately three months.

This allows the area to heal and will give a good indication of the success of the operation.

## Post-operative care and advice

- Avoid all moderate and heavy lifting for about 10 days after the operation.
- Avoid blowing your nose for the first week to prevent bleeding. You may be given nasal drops, spray or douches to help clear your nose. Sneeze with your mouth open to protect your nose.
- You may get some blood coloured watery fluid from your nose for the first two weeks or so, this is normal.
- Your nose will be blocked both sides like a heavy cold for 10-14 days after the operation and you may get a dry mouth; take sips of water regularly to help with this.
- Remain indoors during the first week; avoid contact with people with infections; avoid exposure to dust and smoky places.

**If there is profuse bleeding, report immediately to your nearest A&E Department.**