



**Disclaimer:** This leaflet provides general information and should not be used as a substitute for professional medical advice. It is essential to consult with a qualified healthcare professional for any health concerns or before making any decisions related to your health or treatment.

### What is Septoplasty?

The nasal septum is the thin wall made of cartilage and bone inside your nose that separates your nostrils. A septoplasty is a surgical procedure to straighten the nasal septum. In some people, this septum can be bent or crooked (deviated), which can restrict airflow and make breathing through your nose difficult.

### Why Might I Need a Septoplasty?

You might need a septoplasty if a deviated septum is causing significant nasal obstruction. This blockage can lead to:

- Difficulty breathing through one or both nostrils
- Frequent nosebleeds
- Facial pain
- Headaches
- Snoring or noisy breathing during sleep
- A tendency to sleep on one side to optimise breathing through one nostril

### What Happens Before Surgery?

Before your septoplasty, you'll have a consultation with me. We will discuss your symptoms, medical history, and any medications you are taking. I will examine your nose and may order a CT scan to get a better view of your septum. We will also discuss the potential risks and benefits of the surgery.

I will give you instructions on how to prepare for your surgery, including fasting requirements. It's important to stop taking certain medications, such as aspirin and ibuprofen, before the surgery, as they can increase the risk of bleeding.

### What Happens During Surgery?

Septoplasty is usually performed under general anaesthetic, meaning you'll be asleep during the procedure. I will make incisions inside your nose to access the septum. The bent or deviated portion of cartilage and/or bone is then straightened and repositioned. Small splints or packing may be placed inside your nose to support the septum as it heals. The incisions are then closed with dissolvable stitches. The surgery typically takes one to two hours.

### What Happens After Surgery?

After your surgery, you'll be monitored in a recovery area. You may experience some nasal congestion and discomfort, but this can be managed with pain medication. If packing was placed in your nose, it will usually be removed within a day or two. You will be provided with detailed post-operative instructions, including how to care for your nose and what to expect during the healing process.

### What are the Potential Risks and Complications?

Like any surgical procedure, septoplasty carries potential risks and complications, although they are generally rare. These include:

- Bleeding
- Infection
- Perforation (a hole) in the septum
- Numbness in the nose, upper teeth, or lip
- Change in the shape of the nose
- Difficulty breathing through the nose (that may not improve, or could worsen)
- Persistent nasal blockage or congestion
- Reduced sense of smell (usually temporary)
- Scarring within the nose
- A need for revision surgery

### **Long-Term Outlook**

Septoplasty is generally a very successful procedure in improving nasal breathing. It can take several weeks or even months for the swelling to fully subside and for your breathing to return to normal. In most cases, the results of septoplasty are long-lasting.

### **Recovery and Returning to Normal Activities**

Most people can return to work or school within a week or two after surgery. However, it's essential to avoid strenuous activities, such as heavy lifting or contact sports, for several weeks to allow the septum to heal properly. It is important to protect your nose from any bumps or injuries during this period.

### **Living with Septoplasty**

After the initial recovery period, most people can return to their normal activities without any limitations. You should continue to follow my instructions for nasal care, which may include using saline nasal sprays or rinses to keep your nasal passages moist. Regular follow-up appointments will be scheduled to monitor your healing and address any concerns.