

RAVAL ●●●
FACIAL AESTHETICS AND ENT, PC

NASAL AIRWAY OBSTRUCTION AND SURGERY

*All Your Questions
Answered*





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INTRODUCTION

If you're sick and tired of not being able to breathe comfortably, there's just one thing you need to know. We can correct nasal airway obstructions with surgery. You can breathe normally.

In order to make effective repairs, it is necessary to first understand exactly what is causing your breathing problems. But once proper corrections are made to open your airways, you can say goodbye to snuffling, snoring, and feeling like you just can't quite get enough air in through your nose. What a relief!

Even if you have already done some research, reading this eBook will answer many of your questions about why you're having trouble breathing and what nasal airway surgery is all about. You may also uncover some new questions you want to ask before making a decision to have surgery.

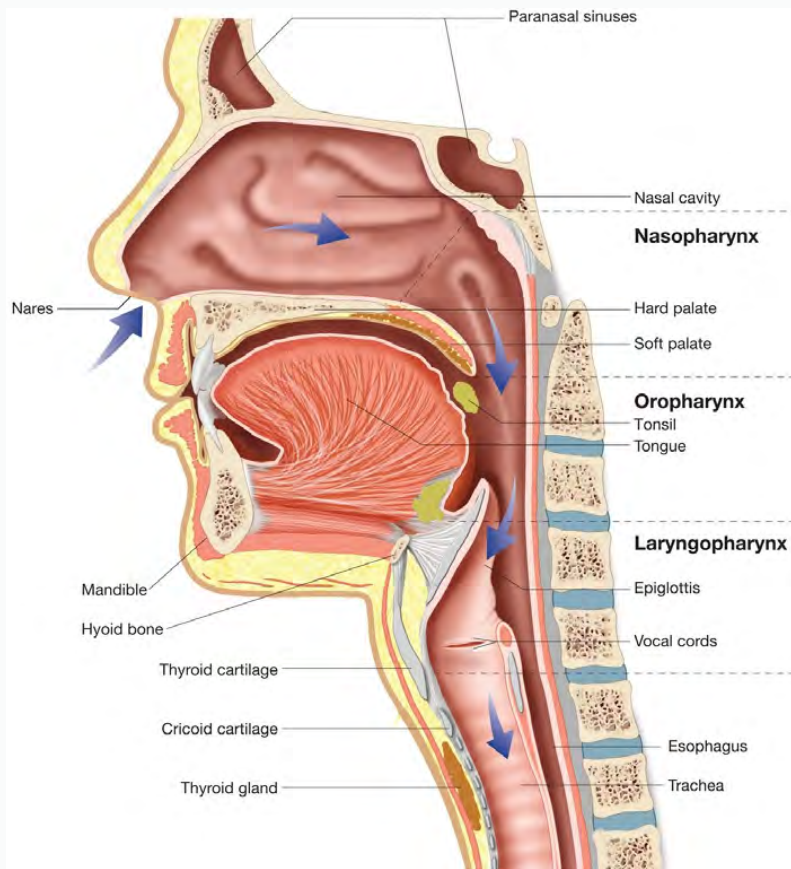




CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS NASAL AIRWAY OBSTRUCTION?

Many people wrongly assume that a deviated septum or “sinus problems” is the only cause of nasal congestion and breathing difficulties. While a deviated septum may contribute to nasal valve collapse, there are other causes of valve collapse and other reasons your airway may be restricted:

- Genetic imperfections
- Injury to the nose
- Aging
- Enlarged turbinates (small bony structures inside your nose)
- Polyps (benign growths that, if too large, can restrict air flow)
- Previous cosmetic rhinoplasty (a procedure that removes part of the nose’s outer wall, such as tip reduction, can result in a collapsed wall that hampers breathing and leaves a pinched appearance)



Nasal valve collapse (and other problems) can occur on just one side of your nose, or both sides.

Your nostrils are not straight “pipes” inside your nose. Instead, there is a complex system of passageways and protrusions that work to filter, warm, and moisturize air as you inhale. As you breathe in, that creates negative pressure inside the nostrils. (If you look in the mirror and give a good sniff, you can see your nostrils draw inward slightly.) If the lower portion of the airway is already constricted for some reason, negative pressure increases, effectively closing off air intake.

However, nasal sidewall collapse is the most common problem. Think of your nose as two side-by-side triangles. The septum that runs up the middle and the base are fixed. Only the sidewalls that form the outside of your nose are flexible. Injury and aging can cause sidewalls to weaken so that they fall inward.

Over time, people with a deviated septum can suffer nasal valve collapse on their “good” side because that half of their nose has worked too hard to compensate for valve restriction on the crooked side.

Nasal airway surgery can fix these problems so you can finally breathe easier. While this is an elective procedure, it is important to note that not having corrective surgery allows problems to get worse, which can lead to serious secondary health issues later on. For example, mouth-breathers often develop dry mouth, which negatively affects your teeth. Dr. Raval often receives referrals from orthodontists, to help patients correct their breathing problems before addressing dental issues.

If you are also considering cosmetic rhinoplasty, your surgeon can combine aesthetic changes with structural repairs in a single surgery.

CHAPTER 2: WHO IS A GOOD CANDIDATE?

Does your breathing improve if you pull upward on your cheek on the side where airflow is restricted? Does your nose look pinched on one or both sides? These are typical indicators of nasal valve collapse.



Nasal airway surgery may be the solution for you if you suffer one or more of these symptoms:

- Difficult or even painful breathing, either all the time, under exertion or while exercising
- Chronic nasal congestion
- Mouth breathing
- Inability to sleep or sleep apnea
- Headaches
- Snoring
- Nasal infections
- Nose bleeds

Full-grown adults in good health are generally good candidates for nasal airway surgery. What else makes you a good candidate? Being a non-smoker and having realistic expectations about the results you can achieve.

CHAPTER 3: WHAT DOES NASAL AIRWAY SURGERY ENTAIL?

Nasal reconstructive surgery is an outpatient procedure, so you will arrive and go home on the same day. Dr. Jeffrey Raval performs all his surgeries in a top-quality, fully accredited surgical center. When your surgery is finished, you will be able to go home in about an hour. You won't be allowed to drive, so you'll need to arrange for someone to drop you off and then pick you up. In some cases, your surgeon may suggest that someone stay with you overnight.

Every surgical procedure is custom-tailored to address your specific problems. In general, the procedure will follow these steps:

1. You will be given general anesthesia so you will be asleep for the entire procedure. This is quite safe for healthy patients. If you have concerns, your surgeon can arrange a phone call with an anesthesiologist to address your questions.
2. Your surgeon will make tiny incisions, usually inside your nose.
3. What happens next depends on what's causing your breathing problem. In general, the procedure will involve straightening the septum and/or reducing any projections that have narrowed one or both airways. Your surgeon may delicately re-sculpt bone or cartilage and may add cartilage grafts, to restore normal air flow. You may have read that some surgeons use titanium grafts, which sounds very high-tech, but Dr. Raval prefers natural cartilage because it brings less risk of infection later on and is tolerated better by the body.
4. The surgeon will then close the incision(s). Because they are tiny and inside your nose, you won't have any noticeable scars.

Your surgery may take only 45 minutes or so to correct nasal valve collapse or a deviated septum. If you elect to have cosmetic rhinoplasty at the same time, your surgery could last as long as 3 or 4 hours.



BEFORE YOUR SURGERY

The healthier you are, the better prepared your body will be for surgery. If you smoke (tobacco or marijuana), you will have to stop at least two weeks ahead of time and continue to not smoke after your surgery. Smoking restricts blood flow, which can hinder your recovery.

You should also stop drinking alcohol at least one week before. On the other hand, exercising prior to surgery has also been shown to improve recovery, especially if you don't exercise on a regular basis.

AFTER YOUR SURGERY

You will wake up in the recovery room, and you will be able to go home about an hour after your surgery. You will be given detailed instructions regarding at-home care of your nose and when to schedule a follow-up visit with Dr. Raval.

At first, you will have stents inside your nose, to support the new changes. Dr. Raval will remove the stents in 2 or 3 days. Most patients say they feel little pain following their surgery and have minimal to no bruising, swelling, or congestion.

You will be off work for a few days. Immediately following your surgery, you will be asked to keep movement to a minimum, and avoid bending over or lifting anything. These activities put pressure on your body that can delay healing. Most patients are able to resume normal (but not strenuous) activities after about 3 days, sticking to moderate exercise for the next couple of weeks. Within a month you should be fully back in action, even with strenuous exercise.



CHAPTER 4: WHAT ARE THE RISKS?



Although reconstructive rhinoplasty patients rarely report post-surgery problems, any type of surgery poses certain risks and possible complications. That can include:

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Scarring
- Infection (rare for otherwise healthy individuals)
- Numbness
- Poor outcome

During your initial consultation, Dr. Raval will explain all the potential risks as well as the benefits of surgery. Ultimately, it will be up to you to decide whether you want the procedure, once you have all the information. Remember, though, that not correcting breathing problems can lead to more serious health problems later on.

CHAPTER 5: WHAT DOES IT COST?

Nasal airway surgery is covered by most insurance plans. The cost is based on your copay, deductible, and other aspects of your specific policy. We recommend reviewing your coverage with your provider prior to scheduling any surgery.

The exact cost of your surgery will depend on the details of your procedure. The total includes several costs other than the surgeon's fee, including:

- Medical tests
- Anesthesia fees
- Surgical facility or hospital costs
- Post-surgery medications

If you are having reconstructive surgery to repair valve collapse due to a previous cosmetic rhinoplasty, your surgery may cost more, because the cosmetic aspect of the procedure may be more difficult. Dr. Raval will have to revise what was done before in order to correct the problem. The risk of infection or poor healing increases with the number of prior surgeries.





Although most health insurance will not cover the cost of cosmetic procedures, nasal airway surgery is considered medically necessary because the purpose is to correct breathing problems which can negatively affect your health. Most insurers will cover this even when valve repair is required as a result of prior cosmetic changes. If you plan to combine your reconstructive surgery with a cosmetic procedure, your insurance may still cover the medically necessary part of the total cost.

Note that some insurance providers now require that we treat a deviated septum and enlarged turbinates first, to see if we can fix your breathing problems without surgery. This typically involves using a medication such as Flonase or Nasacort for two weeks. If that fails, then nasal valve surgery could be performed in a second procedure.

Nonetheless, you should never assume what will or will not be covered, because policies can vary widely. Contact your insurance company to double-check prior to scheduling any surgery. Here at Raval Facial Aesthetics, we also suggest you talk with Davina, our in-office insurance pro. It can be confusing to understand co-pays, co-insurance and other insurance terms, and she can help clarify all that.

CHAPTER 6: CHOOSING THE RIGHT SURGEON

Surgical skill is critical when it comes to nasal airway surgery. These tips will help you select the surgeon who has the training and experience to achieve the best outcome for you:

- Confirm that they are board certified in facial plastic surgery. In many states, any licensed surgeon can perform almost any kind of surgery, regardless of advanced training or experience.
- Ask about their specific experience in nasal reconstructive surgery and experience diagnosing and alleviating your specific challenges. It can be quite difficult to accurately diagnose the cause of breathing problems, and without the proper diagnosis, surgery may not be effective. A facial plastic surgeon who is also an otolaryngologist (ear-nose-throat specialist) will have the strongest training and experience.
- Ask for references of previous patients who had similar breathing problems, and ask them about their experience before and after their surgery.

Jeffrey R. Raval, MD, FACS is board certified by the American Board of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery and the American Board of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery. He is a fellow of both the American College of Surgeons and the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery.

But what really sets Dr. Raval apart is his passion for the nose. He is a skilled facial plastic surgeon, but nasal surgeries are his favorites. He especially enjoys reconstructing airways and improving the nose's aesthetic form at the same time, using his years of practice to achieve a beautiful nose that works better. He has successfully performed more than a thousand cosmetic and/or reconstructive rhinoplasties.



A surgeon's credentials and reputation build trust that they are capable of producing the result you want. But it is also important to pick a surgeon that makes you feel comfortable. They will become your medical partner in improving your breathing. And, possibly, changing your facial appearance as well.

DURING YOUR CONSULTATION

This is your opportunity to get all your questions answered. Do not be shy or worried that you'll appear nervous. That's perfectly normal. In particular, you'll want to discuss:

- Your breathing problems and improvement goals
- Any medical conditions you have and medications you currently take
- Your tobacco, drug and/or alcohol use
- Any previous surgeries you have had, especially rhinoplasty

All this information is important in helping the surgeon determine if you are a good candidate for nasal airway surgery, because it provides a complete picture of your overall health status. The surgeon may also examine your face to help accurately diagnose the cause(s) of your symptoms before recommending a surgical plan tailored just for you. The surgeon will also explain the risks involved and the results you can expect.



CONCLUSION



So what can nasal airway surgery do for you? It can allow you to breathe normally and comfortably and sleep better, for the rest of your life. Having read this eBook, you have a good idea what the surgery involves and what to expect. You may feel ready to move forward, or you may have more questions, but either way, the best next step is to schedule a private one-on-one consultation with your rhinoplasty surgeon.

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