Radio Frequency Volume Reduction for the Nose: Before Your Procedure

What is radio frequency volume reduction for the nose?

Radio frequency volume reduction for the nose is a procedure that may make it easier for you to breathe. You may have this procedure if parts of your nose called the turbinates are too large or are often swollen because of pollution, smoking, allergies, dust, chemicals, and other irritants. The turbinates may block the airways in your nose, making it hard to breathe.

This procedure is done in your doctor's office or a clinic. Your doctor will numb your nose and then put a needle into a turbinate. A small electric current goes through the needle to heat and scar the tissue. Over the next 3 to 6 weeks, the area heals, which reduces the amount of tissue and stiffens it. This will improve airflow and make it easier for you to breathe.

The procedure takes less than 30 minutes, and most people go home right after it is done. You will probably be able to return to work or your normal routine the next day. You may need more than one treatment.

Radio frequency volume reduction reduces turbinate size, improves airflow through the nose, and improves breathing. It is not possible to say how well this procedure will work for each person, or how long the improvement will last.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

What happens before the procedure?

Having a procedure can be stressful. This information will help you understand what you can expect and how to safely prepare for your procedure.
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Preparing for the procedure

• Bring a list of questions to ask your doctors. It is important that you understand exactly what procedure is planned, and the risks, benefits, and other options before your procedure.

• Tell your doctors ALL the medicines, vitamins, supplements, or herbal remedies you are taking. Keep a list of these with you, and bring this with you to every appointment. You will be told which medicine to take or to stop before your procedure.

• Some medicines, such as aspirin or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), and certain vitamins and herbal remedies can increase the risk of bleeding or interact with anesthesia. You may be asked to stop these before the procedure.

• Before your procedure, you may speak with an anesthesia provider to discuss your anesthetic options, including the risks, benefits, and alternatives to each. This may be on the phone or in person.

Taking care of yourself before the procedure

• Build healthy habits into your life. Changes are best made several weeks before the procedure, since your body may react to sudden changes in your habits.
  • Stay as active as you can.
  • Eat a healthy diet.
  • Cut back or quit alcohol and tobacco.

• If you have an advance directive—which may include a living will and a durable power of attorney for health care—let your doctor know. If you do not have one, you may want to prepare one so your doctor and loved ones know your health care wishes. Doctors recommend that everyone prepare these papers before a procedure, regardless of the type of procedure or condition.

What happens on the day of the procedure?

• Follow the instructions exactly about when to stop eating and drinking, or your procedure may be canceled. If your doctor has instructed you to take your medicines on the day of the procedure, please do so using only a sip of water.

• Leave your valuables at home.

At the surgery center or doctor’s office
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- Bring a picture ID.
- You will be kept comfortable and safe by your anesthesia provider. The anesthesia will numb the area being worked on.
- The procedure will take less than 30 minutes.

Going home

- You may need someone to drive you home.
- For your safety, you should not drive until you are no longer taking pain medicines, and you can move and react easily.
- You will be given more specific instructions about recovering from your procedure, including activity and when you may return to work.

When should you call your doctor?

- You have questions or concerns.
- You don’t understand how to prepare for your procedure.
- You become ill before the procedure (such as fever, flu, or a cold).
- You need to reschedule or have changed your mind about having the procedure.

Where can you learn more?

Go to http://www.kp.org

Enter P877 in the search box to learn more about "Radio Frequency Volume Reduction for the Nose: Before Your Procedure".

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