

TULSA SURGICAL ARTS

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Rhinoplasty (Nose Surgery)

PLAIN-LANGUAGE PATIENT GUIDE

What this surgery is

Rhinoplasty reshapes the nose. The surgeon adjusts the bone and cartilage (the firm, bendable tissue) that give the nose its shape. It can make the nose smaller, straighter, or more balanced with your face.

It can also open a blocked airway so you breathe better. A second surgery to fix an old nose job is called a revision. It is harder and takes more planning.

What happens during it

1. You get anesthesia (medicine that makes you sleep).
2. The surgeon works through cuts inside the nose. Sometimes a small cut is added across the strip of skin between the nostrils.
3. The skin is gently lifted off the frame of bone and cartilage.
4. The frame is reshaped. Small pieces of your own cartilage may be added for support.
5. The skin is laid back down and the cuts are closed.
6. A small splint goes on the outside of the nose for about a week.

Main risks

Every surgery has risks. Here are the main ones for this surgery, in plain words. We will go over all of them with you in person.

- A blocked feeling in the nose while swelling settles.
- Nosebleeds in the first days.
- A shape you are not happy with. About one in ten nose surgeries nationwide needs a touch-up.
- A small hole in the wall between the nostrils. This is rare.

- Bleeding. Some bleeding can need another trip to the operating room.
- Infection. Signs are spreading redness, warmth, pus, or fever.
- Scars. Every cut leaves a scar. Most fade over a year. Some stay raised or wide.
- Numb skin near the cuts. Feeling usually returns over months. Small areas can stay numb.
- Blood clots in the legs. A clot can travel to the lungs. That is an emergency.
- Problems from anesthesia (the medicine that makes you sleep). These are rare in healthy people.
- Uneven results. The two sides of the body are never a perfect match.
- The need for another surgery to fix a problem or improve the result.

What recovery is like

First few days

Stuffy nose, bruising under the eyes, and mild aching. Keep your head raised. Do not blow your nose.

One week

The splint comes off. Most bruising fades over the next week.

Two weeks

Most people go back to work or school. Avoid glasses resting on the nose unless we clear it.

Six weeks

Bones are stable. Contact sports and heavy lifting can restart.

One year

The tip keeps refining. The final shape shows at about a year.

When to call us right away

In any emergency, call 911 first.

Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department now — do not drive yourself, do not wait:

- Chest pain or pressure, shortness of breath, or trouble breathing.
- Fainting, sudden confusion, or weakness on one side of the body.
- You have chest pain or trouble breathing.
- One leg swells, or one calf hurts more than the other.
- Blood soaks a bandage and does not slow down with gentle pressure.

Otherwise call us at 918-392-7900, day or night, if:

- A nosebleed that will not stop after ten minutes of gentle pressure.
- You have a fever of 101.5°F (38.6°C) or higher.
- Redness spreads out from a cut, or you see pus.
- Your pain gets much worse instead of better.
- A wound pulls open, or stitches come apart.

Reviewed and approved by Austin Kluis, MD — 2026-08-23.

This guide is for general learning only. It is not medical advice for you. Your plan may differ. Always follow the instructions your surgeon gives you.