

Deviated septum - FAQ

What is a deviated septum?

A deviated septum occurs when your nasal septum which is a thin wall that separates your right and left nasal passage, is displaced to one side. In many people, the nasal septum is off-center — or deviated — making one nasal passage smaller.

Also note that injury to the nose can cause a deviated septum. Nasal injuries may occur due to falls, sports, car accidents, or even getting hit in the nose during a fight or an accident.

A deviated septum may also be congenital, or present at birth. The deviation may be from a difficult birth or connective tissue disease.

In severe cases, it can block one side of the nose and reduce airflow, causing difficulty breathing. The exposure of a deviated septum to the drying effect of airflow through the nose may sometimes contribute to crusting or bleeding in certain people.

Note: A nasal blockage or congestion or obstruction can occur from a deviated nasal septum, from swelling of the tissues lining the nose or from both.



TYPES OF NASAL DEVIATION

Important note:

Most septal displacements result in no symptoms, and you may not even know you have a deviated septum.

Some septal deformities may cause the following symptoms:

People with a severely deviated septum may have a change in the shape of their nose.

Other deviated septum symptoms include difficulty breathing on one or both sides of the nose along with one or more symptoms like:

- Headaches or face pain.
- Nasal congestion.
- Noisy breathing.
- Nosebleeds.
- Sinusitis (inflammation of the sinuses).
- Sleep apnea.
- Neck pain
- Shoulder pain
- Migraine like headaches
- Snoring

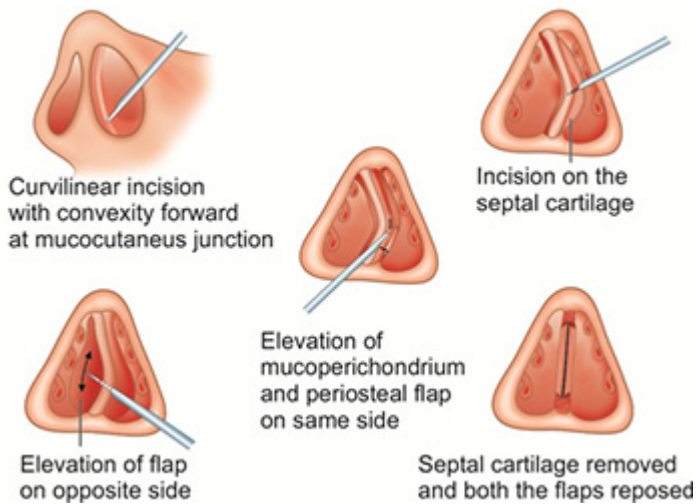
What are my treatment options?:

A nasal blockage or congestion or obstruction can occur from a deviated nasal septum, from swelling of the tissues lining the nose or from both.

In some cases, treatment of nasal obstruction may include medications to reduce the swelling.

Treatment for a deviated septum is a surgery called a septoplasty. . If you have breathing problems, frequent sinus infections or other bothersome symptoms, a septoplasty is recommended

A septoplasty is usually a one to two hour procedure. You can go home the same day, in most cases.



Three main steps of a septoplasty are:

- Anesthesia: Your surgeon uses local and general anesthesia to make sure you're comfortable. Local anesthesia numbs the area. General anesthesia puts you to sleep during the procedure.
- Repair: Your surgeon under the vision of an endoscope will separate the membrane that covers the septum. Then the surgeon removes the cartilage and bone that is deviated. Your surgeon then replaces the membranes and places intranasal splints on both sides of the septum sutures them together with stitches.
- Bandaging: Your surgeon may pack your nose with gauze only if there's any unforeseen bleeding.

How early do I see my doctor?

Visit your ENT doctor if you experience a blocked nostril (or nostrils) that don't respond to treatment; or frequent nose bleeds, or recurring sinus infections.

- Dr. Prashanth R Reddy

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