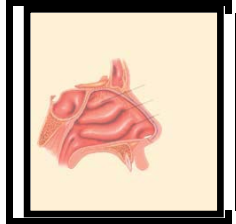


## **TURBINATES AND TURBINATE REDUCTION** **Connecticut Pediatric Otolaryngology**

### **WHAT ARE TURBINATES?**

The turbinates are scroll like structures located in the nasal cavity. The purpose of the turbinate is to humidify and filter the air that is inhaled through the nose. The inferior turbinate is a long structure and fills the lower portion of the nasal airway. Its size will change dependent on numerous factors. It may become very swollen in response to allergies, infections, or enlarged adenoids. For example, when a cold causes severe congestion, it is usually the inferior turbinate structure that swells.



### **TREATMENT OF ENLARGED NASAL TURBINATES**

Enlarged inferior turbinates are often the cause of chronic nasal congestion and nasal obstruction. Primary medical treatment usually consists of topical nasal steroids. Antihistamines, decongestants or antibiotics may also be used.

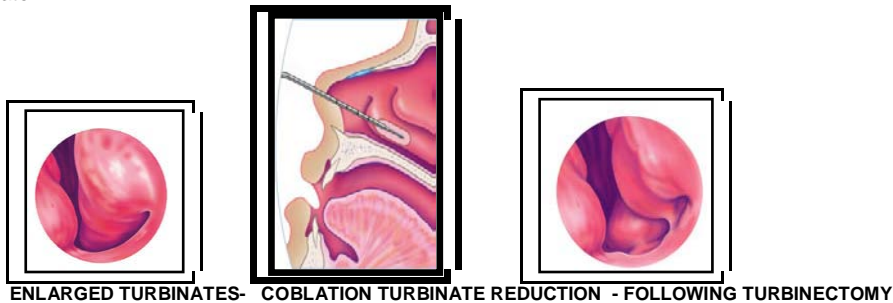
Even after the underlying problem is addressed, such as adenoid removal, chronic infection or allergy, the turbinate enlargement may remain. For patients who do not respond to medical treatment, or those who find compliance with the medical therapy difficult, surgical intervention may be beneficial.

### **SURGICAL OPTIONS FOR TURBINATE REDUCTION**

There are a variety of methods used to remove or shrink the nasal turbinate.

Coblation Turbinate Reduction is the primary method used in our practice. This procedure will take place in the operating room under general anesthesia. The turbinate is shrunk down by placement of a surgical probe within the inferior turbinate. The tissue is then coblated (a controlled, non-heat driven process using radiofrequency energy) to vaporize the submucosal tissue. This allows the mucosal layer of the turbinate to be preserved allowing for continued appropriate nasal humidification and cleansing.

In most cases, it is important that the turbinate not be removed completely because its removal will may result in a very dry, crusty nose that is unable to adequately humidify and warm the air. Occasionally, turbinate tissue will re-grow after turbinate surgery and the procedure may need to be repeated. This is preferable to the situation of totally removing the turbinate.



### **RISKS**

As with any surgery, there are some associated risks.

- Your child will receive general anesthesia for the procedure. There is a small risk of complication occurring due to the anesthesia.
- There is a very low risk of postoperative bleeding which would require a trip back to the hospital for evaluation.
- Mild discomfort for generally 1-2 days.
- Most children are feeling back to themselves within one or two days following the surgery. Some of the common complaints following the surgery some mild nasal discomfort or sore throat. We will give you a prescription for a pain medication that should be taken as needed to help relieve the discomfort.

**THE DAY OF SURGERY....**

The surgery is performed in the Pediatric Operating Room. The procedure will take approximately 20-30 minutes. Following the operation, your child will go to the pediatric recovery room (PACU or Post-Anesthesia Care Unit). You can be with your child at this time. Some children are disoriented and upset as they come out of the anesthesia. This is normal. Your child will be ready to go home once they are drinking and acting like themselves again. This normally takes an hour.

**WHAT TO EXPECT FOLLOWING SURGERY...**

Your child will have no limitations in diet following the surgery. *They may eat or drink anything that they want... we find that children who eat and drink well, stay hydrated and recover quicker.*

If your child is having postoperative pain, ensure that they are taking their pain medicine.

There are no limitations in activity. Most children will return to school and other extracurricular activities within a day or two following the operation.

**FOLLOW-UP**

All the postoperative visits are scheduled with our nurse practitioners. We would like to see your child three to six weeks following the surgery for a postoperative check.

Please call to schedule an appointment.

**If you ever have questions or concerns, we would be happy to talk to you or see your child at any time.**