



# Central West Specialists

Ear, Nose & Throat Specialist

## NASAL ALARPLASTY

Sometimes nasal congestion is caused by softening of the side walls of the lower nose. This can occur after injury, surgery, or the passing of the years. The softening of the cartilage in this area causes a feeling of congestion of breathing in, through the nose. This problem can be very annoying and numerous treatments over the years have been tried including taping of the nose and putting small tubes into the nose. Clearly none of these options have been very successful.

Over the last few years an internal splint made from a special plastic developed in America called Medpor has been used to strengthen the side walls of the lower nose. This operation is called an alarplasty and takes about 30 minutes under a general anaesthetic in hospital. A small incision on either side of the nose inside the nostril is made to allow insertion of the splint. It is held in position by two sutures on either side that come through the skin and the incision is closed with some dissolving stitches which fall out after about two weeks.

**Possible Problems:** Sometimes it is not possible to reverse the feeling of nasal congestion because of the degree of laxity of the tissues in the lateral wall. This can lead to a disappointing result but certainly the person is not any worse off than preoperatively. This would only happen in a small proportion of cases.

**Infection:** The nose always has germs in it and some of these can get into the operative area. This is actually quite uncommon. Any other problems with this operation are really quite rare.

**Post Operative Care:** It is worthwhile putting some ointment inside each nostril and on the external sutures once or twice a day until they are removed. This will help minimise the crusting inside the nostril. Apart from this, there is very little to do and the area heals quickly. If at any time you are having concerns after the operation, please contact me at the above address.

Dr Peter Bryan F.R.A.C.S.

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