

## **WHAT IS A TURBINOPLASTY?**

A turbinoplasty is an operation to treat chronic nasal obstruction and congestion. The turbinates are sausage shaped swellings in the nose. There are three of them in each side. They are made of bone covered by a spongy soft tissue that continues with the lining of the nose. They help humidify and regulate the temperature of the air we breathe inside our noses. Normally, the turbinates may swell or shrink several times over the course of hours. However, when your child has a cold or sinus infection the turbinates swell for days or weeks on end. When irritated by allergies, pollution, infection or smoke, the turbinates may not shrink back for much longer periods. In this case, your child would feel that the nose is blocked and he/she will have to breathe through his/her mouth. Many children will get better when they use decongestants (tablets, syrups, or sprays in the nose). However, some will not or will stop getting better after awhile.

### **What does the operation involve?**

The operation takes about 30-45 minutes. The operation is done while the child is asleep (general anesthetic). The operation is usually all done through the nostrils and there will be no scars on the child's face. A cut is made inside in the front of the turbinate. The turbinate is made smaller by using a special instrument called a microdebrider. A microdebrider is a tube that has a small revolving blade inside it. The tube sucks the tissue that the blade shaves or cuts when it gets slotted into the body of the turbinate, almost like a skewer. Afterwards, the doctor will push the turbinate outwards until the bone cracks. These steps will make more room inside the nose and the child will breathe easier.

### **What are the risks of the operation?**

Sometimes the nose may bleed after this operation and we may have to put more dressings into it. Rarely, the child may need to return to the operating room to stop the bleeding.

**After the operation:**

- It is normal for bleeding to occur after the operation. Your child may need an absorbable dressing placed in each side of the nose to stop the bleeding.
- It is common for the nose to be quite blocked and to be a little uncomfortable for a few days after the operation. Simple painkillers usually help. Your child may be given drops or spray to help with the blocked nose.
- Some children may feel that the nose or the upper lip is a bit numb. This may last for a few days.
- It is important that your child does not blow his/her nose for the first two days after the operation. Your surgeon will advise you on when you can start to gently blow your nose.
- Some mucus and blood stained liquid may drain from the nose for the first week or so following the operation and this is normal. It is important to stay away from dusty and smoky environments while the child recovering.
- Many children go home on the day of the operation, but some may stay overnight. Your child will need to rest at home, away from school and/or daycare, for one week.
- After your child's surgery, and before you go home, your nurse will give you instructions on when to return to the hospital for a follow-up visit and how to care for your child at home.