

FACELIFT AND NECKLIFT SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

You will need to purchase: Antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin or Polysporin), ice packs or frozen peas, Q-tips, cotton balls, hydrogen peroxide, plus prescriptions.

Two weeks before surgery:

All aspirin and aspirin-like products (Ibuprofen) need to be discontinued unless your medical doctor requires you to take it. (See list of medications containing aspirin and aspirin-like products.) *Please let the doctor know if you must continue these medications.*

Six weeks before surgery:

We expect you to stop smoking at this time. Smoking will increase the risk of skin loss around the incision areas.

Evening before surgery:

1. **NOTHING** to eat, drink or smoke after midnight. Shampoo your hair and wash your face thoroughly. **Remove all make-up.**
2. Take medications as prescribed.

Morning of surgery:

1. Shampoo your hair – if not the night before – and wash face thoroughly. Dry hair and comb out any tangles. **Be sure all make-up is removed.** Do not apply and makeup, creams, or products to face or hair.
2. Bring scarf to surgical center, if desired.
3. Remove your contact lenses. You will not be able to wear them immediately post-operatively. Do not wear any jewelry.

After surgery:

1. Apply ice packs or frozen peas (placed in a Ziploc bag) to face, intermittently— 30 minutes on and then 30 minutes off-- for the first 72 hours. Use a thin washcloth or gauze between the plastic and your skin.
2. Relax and keep your head slightly elevated. Place a pillow or two under your shoulders and back to allow your head to be slightly extended with your chin up. **DO NOT** allow your chin to go toward your chest. This should be done for at least 1 week. You may rest in a comfortable reclining chair during the day. Keep your head elevated above your chest at all times to reduce swelling and bruising.
3. Avoid any type of straining, bending, or heavy lifting for at least 72 hours. While in bed, flex your feet a couple of times an hour to promote good blood circulation.

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4. Take the pain medication every 4-6 hours, if needed. If you have no pain, do not take the medication. Always take narcotic pain medicine with some food to decrease nausea. For minimal pain use Extra Strength Tylenol only. **DO NOT** any aspirin or aspirin-like products.
5. Avoid turning your head from side-to-side or up-and-down. Also avoid excessive facial movements or excessive chewing for the first few days. A soft diet is best.
6. You can expect swelling and bruising of the face and neck. If the swelling on one side is suddenly more pronounced than the other side, **call the office immediately.**
7. ***Do not smoke. This is very important.*** Alcohol and smoking can prolong swelling and delay healing.
8. The doctor may insert a drain behind each ear. This helps avoid accumulation of blood in the face and neck area. It is important that the drain reservoir remain compressed. It is rare that you will need to empty the drains, but in case this occurs, please empty the drain as needed and instructed. Your recovery room nurse will review this with you and your caregiver before you leave the surgical center the day of your surgery. The drain will be removed at the same time as the compressive head dressing.
9. We will see you in the office the next day to remove the drains and place a facial compression dressing.

Other instructions:

1. Once your dressing has been removed, you may shower and wash your hair with a mild shampoo. Your hair may be dried with a blow dryer on a cool setting only since you may not have full sensation in the operative areas. Gently wash your face and neck at this time. Be careful when combing your hair to avoid catching your comb in the suture line.
2. Remember to follow the instructions for care of other sites of surgery such as the eyelids and for a peel if these were performed at the same time.
3. After the dressings have been removed, you will be given a facelift support. Wear the support 24 hours a day during the day and throughout the night for the first 7 days. Be careful to avoid pressure on your incision lines. You may remove the compressive dressing intermittently for showering and for comfort. You may trim the support around the ears if it causes discomfort in that area. The more the dressing is worn in the first 7 days, the better the support it provides.
4. Clean all incision lines with hydrogen peroxide using a cotton ball or Q-tip. Then apply antibiotic ointment using a Q-tip 3 times a day. Keep the wounds moist with a thin layer of ointment.
5. Make-up may be applied on the 7th day, but do not get it near the incisions until 2 days after the stitches have been removed.
6. Hair coloring and permanents should be postponed until 4 weeks after surgery.
7. Normal activities may be resumed after 3 weeks. Sexual activities may be resumed after 7 days. Excessive strenuous activities may be resumed after 4 weeks.

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8. Avoid excess sun exposure for 6 months as it can cause swelling or uneven change in pigmentation. Wear a hat and #20 sunscreen with both UVA and UVB protection.

General information:

1. Swelling and bruising will probably be more than expected. It may extend into the neck area and onto your cheeks. This can be covered with makeup and usually will be gone within 2 weeks.
2. Some stitches will be removed on or about the 7th day, and the rest will be removed the second week (day 10 or 14). It is generally not painful.
3. Your face and neck may feel light, and there may feeling of numbness in the cheek and ear areas for several weeks. This will disappear and return to normal.
4. Numbness, tingling, swelling, itching, discoloration, bumpiness, hardness, crusting, tightness, and redness around the incisions are normal complaints and should go away with full healing.
5. Your hair may become oily from the antibiotic ointment, and your shampoo will not remove it from your hair.

Please do not hesitate to call Dr. Sidle if you have any questions or concerns.

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