

## **FACELIFT AND NECKLIFT SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS**

**Before your procedure, you will need to purchase:** Antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin or Polysporin), ice packs or bags of frozen peas, Q-tips, hydrogen peroxide, plus your prescriptions.

**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.

**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 Dr. Sidle or his staff know if you must continue these medications.*

**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 your 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 to wear home after the procedure, if desired. A hooded zip-up (must be zip-up) sweatshirt may be worn afterward as well.
3. You may take your prescription medications with a sip of water only. Nothing to eat or drink. Take your first dose of the antibiotic the morning before your procedure if already prescribed. If your procedure is in the operating room, your first dose will be given there.
4. Remove your contact lenses. You will not be able to wear them post-operatively. You may bring your glasses. Do not wear any jewelry.

**After surgery:**

1. Apply ice packs or bags of frozen peas to face, intermittently—30 minutes on and then 30 minutes off-- for the first 48 hours. Use a thin washcloth or gauze between the plastic and your skin.

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2. Relax and keep your head slightly elevated. Place a pillow or two under your shoulders and back to keep your head above your chest. 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. Do not allow your chin to go toward your chest. It is best to keep your chin up for the first week. It is a good idea to sleep with a rolled hand towel or small pillow under your chin to keep it elevated off of your chest for the first week.
4. 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.
5. Take the pain medication every 6 hours, only if needed. If you have no pain, do not take any pain 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 such as ibuprofen.
6. Avoid turning your head too much 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.
7. 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 or if there is sudden bulging/fullness on one side, **call the office immediately.**
8. **Do not smoke. This is very important.** Alcohol and smoking can prolong swelling and delay healing.
9. The doctor may insert a drain behind each ear. This helps avoid accumulation of body fluids in the face and neck area. If there is a drain reservoir, it is important that the reservoir remain compressed and under negative pressure. 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. When a drain is placed, it will be removed at the same time as the compressive head dressing.
10. Patients are generally seen in the office the next day to remove the drains and remove the main dressing. You will be instructed to use a smaller compressive dressing (facelift support) after the primary dressing is removed.

### Other instructions:

1. You may shower and wash your hair with a mild shampoo 48 hours after surgery. Your hair may be dried with a blow dryer on a cool setting 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 for the first 7 days. Be careful to avoid too much pressure on your incision lines. You may remove the compressive dressing intermittently for showering and for comfort. You may trim the support around

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- 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 Q-tips. Pat dry. Then apply antibiotic ointment using a clean finger 3 times a day. Keep the wounds moist with a thin layer of ointment at all times. This will help the wounds heal faster. Do not allow crusts to build up on the sutures.
  5. Make-up may be applied on the 7<sup>th</sup> 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.
  8. Avoid excess sun exposure for 3 months as it can cause swelling or uneven change in pigmentation. Wear a broad-brimmed hat and a 30 SPF 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 be a feeling of numbness in the cheek and ear areas for several weeks. This will disappear and return to normal in time.
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 may not initially remove it from your hair. Our patients have noted that straight shampoo on the hair before adding water helps remove this ointment.
6. If you have a history of shingles or severe cold sores, discuss this with Dr. Sidle or his staff before your surgery. If you have unusual pain or burning sensation after your surgery, call Dr. Sidle or his staff immediately. Activation of latent virus can occur and cause unusual scarring.

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

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