

FACELIFT POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

The following is a list of general instructions for your care following your surgery. Please read them carefully several times as most of your questions should be answered here. Instructions for your care will also be reviewed the morning after surgery. Carefully following these instructions should help you get the best results from your surgery.

After Surgery

Following your surgery, you will be sent home with a dressing to be worn overnight. You may or may not have drains that need to be tended to. Care for these drains will be reviewed prior to you leaving the hospital/surgery center. The night following surgery it is important for you to have someone with you – this is a must! You should plan on remaining within thirty miles from the location of your surgery for this first night. It is also important for you to keep your head elevated the evening after surgery as well as for the first two weeks following surgery. This can be done by either sleeping in a recliner tilted at 45 degrees or sleeping with two pillows underneath the head. Avoid rolling onto your face. Sleeping on your back for the first two weeks after surgery helps to ensure this.

Daily Care

This care will be reviewed the morning following your surgery:

1. Go over suture lines three times daily with hydrogen peroxide on a Q-tip both in front of your ear as well as behind it. After this, again with a Q-tip, apply a liberal amount of Bacitracin (other antibiotic such as Neosporin are acceptable) ointment.
2. You may shower the second day following surgery and should shower every day following this. Be sure to use a gentle shampoo, such as Johnson's Baby Shampoo, for two weeks.
3. Be sure to report immediately any signs of bleeding that persist after ten minutes of direct pressure, infection, redness, fever, unusual drainage, or pain.
4. Stitches and staples will be removed at the one week visit, except for one stitch, which will remain in the ear lobe until day ten to fourteen.

What to Expect

Swelling

Swelling will vary both patient-to-patient as well as side-to-side. Swelling may actually increase the first three to four days before subsiding. Most of your swelling should resolve over the first two to three weeks. Do expect, however, to have minor fluctuations in the remaining swelling over the course of the next two to three months. Things to do to minimize this swelling include keeping your head elevated as much as possible over the first two to three weeks, avoid bending over or heavy lifting for the first three weeks, and avoid prolonged sun exposure for the first two to three months. PLEASE DO NOT APPLY ICE TO THE SKIN. You risk burning the skin in areas that are numb.

Discoloration

Bruising will vary like swelling from patient-to-patient as well as side-to-side. Most bruising and discoloration should resolve over the first two weeks. Makeup, with Dr. Hamilton's permission, can be applied ten days to two weeks after surgery.

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Numbness

Most of your face will be numb following surgery. This is normal and will subside over the coming weeks to months. Unusual sensations, pins and needles, and occasionally mild discomfort may occur, as these nerves regenerate over time.

Possible Complications

Bleeding, infection, scarring, nerve injury with numbness or weakness, relaxation, asymmetry, possible need for further surgery.

Restrictions

1. No strenuous exercise for at least two weeks
2. No heavy lifting for three weeks
3. No head turning activities or exercises for four weeks
4. Hair coloring should be delayed for four weeks after surgery
5. No “pull-over” clothing for two weeks
6. Avoid hard chewing foods for two weeks
7. Avoid yawning or wide mouth opening for two weeks
8. No driving for one, preferably two weeks, after surgery
9. Ear rings- please do not wear any type for at least 30 days. Dr Hamilton may let you resume stud earrings 1-3 months post surgery, depending on how things have healed
10. No swimming for 4 weeks
11. No ice

Finally

The healing time for facelift surgery is often less than expected and the results are worth the wait. While swelling should be completely gone after four to six weeks, your healing will continue for the entire first year. I will follow you through this entire process, but be patient.

Please do not ever hesitate to contact our office.

Mark M. Hamilton, M.D., F.A.C.S.

Signature

Printed Name

Date