

Post-operative Instructions Following Facelift Surgery

Facelift surgery includes any procedure of the middle and/or lower face and neck. A facelift procedure can be performed as an ambulatory procedure when the following simple instructions are followed.

Prior to your surgical procedure:

Please discontinue all aspirin containing medications 2 weeks prior to your surgery. These medications include, but are not limited to: Motrin, Advil, Aleve, Excedrin, Bufferin (for a complete list, please contact our office.)

- Begin taking the medicine prescribed for your procedure that needs to be taken prior to surgery. An example of this is **Vitamin C and Bactroban Ointment (Mupirocin Ointment.)**
- Please avoid drinking alcohol and wine 48 hours prior to surgery.
- Please avoid drinking herbal teas and taking herbal supplements 1 week prior to surgery (St. John's Wort, Eccinechea), Omega Fatty Acids (fish oils).
- Please avoid caffeinated beverages 48 hours prior to surgery (coffee, energy drinks).
- Please have nothing to eat or drink after **midnight** the night before surgery.
- **The morning of surgery**, please wake up early and wash your hair, neck and face with **the HIBICLENS Soap** we prescribed for you prior to coming in for your surgery.
- Apply **Bactroban Ointment** inside nose with Q-Tip **2x a day for 3 days before surgery and continue for 2 weeks after your surgery.**
- Please wear cotton underwear the day of your surgery. This may sound like an unusual request, but nylon and synthetic fabrics should be avoided in the operating room.
- Please arrive on time, this helps us avoid delays.
- Please arrange for an escort to take you home after your surgery. **No one is allowed to travel home on their own.**
- Please don't wear contact lenses the day of surgery.
- Our office will call you before surgery to inform you about the time to arrive.

After your Surgery

1) Things To Do

- **For your benefit, we will arrange for you to stay overnight with a nurse at a hotel** after your surgery. Prior to surgery, arrange for someone to take you home the following morning, stay with you, and bring you to the office for the next appointment on **Day 4.**
- After your surgery you will have a dressing around your face. Please keep this dressing dry for 24hrs.
- You will need to keep the incision/suture lines clean and moist. Clean them 2-3 times a day with Hydrogen Peroxide 3% then apply Bactroban (Mupirocin) ointment. Do not put ointment over the paper tapes that have been applied to your chin and ears.
- You may brush your teeth gently with a toothbrush or your finger
- You may eat a normal diet, but avoid foods that are hard to chew or may upset your stomach. Drink lots of fluids.

- Keep your head elevated as much as possible. Lying flat may increase swelling. Sitting up, walking or resting with your head elevated is recommended. Sleep with your head elevated on 3-4 pillows and sleep on your back rather than on your side for the first 2 weeks.
- **Keep cold compresses over your ears, jaw, and neck if there is still swelling present-at least 20 minutes every 2 hours. Have a bowl of water with ice, at your side so that you can keep the cloth cold. Do not place anything frozen directly on the skin.**
- Prescription pain medication and sleeping pills may cause weakness and prolonged convalescence, so try non-prescription remedies first, i.e. – cold compresses, Extra Strength Tylenol, Gravol. If this is ineffective after 45 minutes, use the prescribed medications.
- Some discomfort (pain), bleeding, bruising, and swelling are normal, but if you experience progressive or one-sided pain, bleeding, or excessive bruising or swelling, you must report it immediately to the office.
- Check with Dr. Zimm before resuming strenuous physical activity. You should not be driving if you are still taking pain medication.
- Eyeglasses can be worn when dressing is removed, and contact lenses can be inserted **only if your eyes don't feel dry.**
- As best as you can, avoid sun exposure.

2) Things Not To Do

- Do not bend over, lift anything heavier than 5 lbs. or engage in vigorous exercise.
- Do not smoke. Do not drink alcohol.
- Do not bump your face or neck – beware of restless/playful children, bedmates, and pets. Do not put any pressure on your face or neck when you sleep.
- Avoid direct sunlight as much as possible for 6 weeks, then use sunblock with at least SPF 30 whenever outside.
- Do not use hot tub or sauna for at least 6 weeks
- Do not take Aspirin, Advil, Motrin, etc. as it may cause bleeding. Ask us when to resume other routine medications.
- Do not compare your progress with other patients, as everyone heals differently.

3) Post Op Schedule

- Your appointments after surgery will be on or around **Day 1, Day 4, Day 7** and **3 weeks** following your operation. Please plan accordingly. There will be several follow-up visits during the first year following your surgery.

- **Day 1:** This will be at the hotel the morning after surgery. A light dressing or neck strap will be applied.
- **Day 4:** The sutures (stitches) under the chin and in front of the ears are removed. This is relatively painless, so do not become overly concerned. You may shower and wash your hair by letting the water just run over your hair, do not use shampoo. If bruising has started to go away, begin warm compresses to decrease bruising, alternating with the cold compresses to minimize swelling.
- **Day 7:** All remaining sutures and clips are removed. The paper tapes are removed. You may then begin shampooing your hair gently using the palms of your hands. Baby shampoo is preferred to wash the hair.
- With 90% of our patients, most of the swelling and bruising disappears by Day 14. Most of the residual swelling will probably be resolved by Week 6 but the very last 10% of swelling may take up to a full year to disappear.

Resuming Activities

1. Driving – 1 week
2. Alcohol – 2 weeks
3. Smoking – 1 month
4. Return to work or school – usually 2-3 weeks (sometimes sooner)
5. Hair coloring or permanent – 5-6 weeks
6. Recreational swimming, jogging, tennis, weight lifting, aerobics, cycling, sex, etc. – 3 weeks
7. Competitive sports, contact sports, skiing, diving – 6 weeks
8. Anything else – please ask us!

Diet

1. Begin with bland foods (clear liquids, broths, etc.) and advance as tolerated.
2. Avoid alcohol, smoking, nicotine, and caffeine, for these will dramatically slow down the healing process.

MEDICATIONS

Take medications as directed by your prescriptions.

If pain is mild, you may take extra strength Tylenol instead per manufacturer's directions.

Do not take any products containing Ibuprofen or Aspirin (including Advil, Midol, etc.) in place of pain medicine.

Occasionally, you may encounter a sore throat due to anesthesia. Lozenges, such as Cepacol can help to relieve this temporary discomfort.

PLEASE REFER TO YOUR MEDICATION SCHEDULE SHEET FOR MORE INFORMATION ON WHEN TO TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS. THIS WAS PROVIDED IN YOUR PACKET

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOUR SURGERY

Some bruising and swelling is normal but icing will help to minimize it.

The lips may become dry from breathing through the mouth; you may use Vaseline or Chap Stick to lubricate them.

Occasionally, you may have a fever up to 101.5°F in the first 48 hours and this is normal.

Nausea or vomiting can occur after your surgery for the first 24 hours following surgery. Please notify us if you are experiencing severe nausea and vomiting and are unable to keep liquids down.

Resuming social activities and returning to work depend upon the level of physical activity and public contact you require, as well as the swelling and bruising you may develop. While the average patient is able to resume work and social activities in a few days, this is not the case for everyone.

Numbness in face and ears is normal up to a year after surgery.

Itchy feeling is normal and is a sign of healing in the face.

With time the pinkish color made by the incisions will fade, although the use of sunblock will expedite the healing process

You will be receiving a phone call for my office after surgery. Please share all concerns and questions with us. Our phone number is (212) 327-4600.