

Facelift/Necklift Post-operative Instructions

- Have someone drive you home after surgery and stay with you at home for 1-2 days.
- Get plenty of rest and follow a balanced diet.
- Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may want to add more raw fruit to your diet, and be sure to increase fluid intake.
- Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin until approved by your surgeon.
- No alcohol for several weeks as it causes fluid retention.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.
- Wear your compression garment 24/7 for the 2 weeks. After the second week we recommend you continue to wear the garment while at home for an additional 2 weeks. You may take it off when you go out. The length of time you may need to wear the garment varies by individual surgeon. Ask your provider for specific instructions.
- Start walking as soon as possible, this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.
- Do not drive for 2 weeks post-operatively.
- You may tire easily. Plan on taking it easy for the first week.
- No strenuous activities, including sex and heavy housework, for at least 6 weeks. (Walking and mild stretching are fine.)
- Return to work in 4 weeks.
- If drainage tubes have been placed, you may shower 48 hours after removal.
- You may bathe 48 hours after surgery. Avoid steam baths and saunas for several months.
- Avoid exposing scars to the sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 30 or greater).
- Keep steri-strips on.
- Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.
- Keep head elevated; sleep with head on 2 pillows.
- Do not use hair dye or permanent solution until approved by your surgeon. If you plan to color/highlight your hair, please do this 1 week prior to surgery as you will not be able to color/highlight until 8 weeks post-operatively.
- You may use cold compresses for comfort and to help decrease the swelling.

- Hair is generally shampooed on the 2nd postoperative day. The area of sutures must be washed gently but thoroughly each time.
- Avoid use of hair dryers or curling irons as you will not have sensation in the affected areas.
- You may use makeup after the sutures are removed; new facial makeup can be used to cover up bruising, but not on the incisions. It is important to gently remove all makeup.
- Maximum discomfort should occur in the first few days, improving each day thereafter.
- Bruising, swelling, numbness, and tightness and tenderness of skin for 10-14 days or longer.
- You will be sent home wearing a compression garment. This provides compression and support.
- You may experience tightness in the neck and difficulty turning side to side for 1-2 months.
- Skin may feel dry and rough for several months.
- Face can look and feel strange and be distorted from the swelling.
- Men have a need to shave behind their ears, where beard-growing skin is repositioned.
- Pale, bruised and puffy face for several weeks.
- Wearing scarves, turtlenecks and high-collared blouses masks the swelling and discoloration.
- By the third week, you will look and feel much better.
- Final result is not fully realized for approximately 6 months.
- Your 1st postoperative appointment will be within 24 hours after surgery.
- Sutures are usually removed from in front of the ear in 3-5 days.
- Remaining sutures and metal clips, if used, are usually removed in 1-2 weeks.
- If a drainage tube was inserted, it will be removed in 1-2 days.

- **When should I call my doctor?**
 - **If you have increased swelling or bruising.**
 - **If swelling and redness persist after a few days.**
 - **If you have increased redness along the incision.**
 - **If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.**
 - **If you have any side effects to medications; such as, rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.**
 - **If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.**
 - **If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odor.**
 - **If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.**
 - **If you have loss of feeling or motion.**
 - **Who should I call if I have questions?**
- Prior to your surgery, pain medication will be prescribed by your Surgeon.
- After having surgery, it is expected you will experience some pain even with pain medication. This is a normal part of recovery.
- You will be provided a prescription for pain medicine that will last until your first return post-op visit.
- At your first post-op visit, your pain will be evaluated. The surgical team will manage your pain for the acute recovery phase.
- Acute Pain management for major surgery is typically 6 to 12 weeks
- Acute pain management for minor procedures is typically 7-10 days
- You may not drive while you are taking narcotic pain medication or otherwise instructed by your surgical team.

Please call our office at 832-835-1131 if you have any questions or problems.
If it is outside of business hours, please call the Dr. Patel at 281-803-9781.