

Face, Neck and/or Brow Lift Postop Instructions

Please read and become familiar with these instructions BEFORE and AFTER surgery. By following these instructions carefully, you will assist in obtaining the best possible result from your surgery.

1. You will leave the operating room with a turban-type of pressure dressing in place. This is to remain in place until I remove it the following day. This will be replaced by a second, lighter dressing, which should be worn for one more day. If your first dressing becomes too uncomfortable, report it to us, but please do not remove or loosen this dressing without our direction.
2. Once your second dressing has been removed the second day after surgery, you should gently clean the incision lines twice a day using Q-tips and mild soap and water. After each cleaning, apply a thin layer of antibiotic ointment over the incision lines to minimize crusting and improve healing. Do NOT apply vitamin E or any other ointments or medications unless we prescribe it! Dried blood or hard crusts can be removed using hydrogen peroxide mixed with water in a 1:1 ratio.
3. On the second day after surgery (after your second dressing has been removed) you may gently shampoo your hair; however, do not blow dry for 5 days and postpone any hair coloring or permanent waves for 4 weeks. Avoid strong combing or brushing of the hair near the incisions and around the ears for 2 weeks. Antibiotic ointment in the hair left over from surgery can be easily removed by adding about a tablespoon of baking soda to any clarifying shampoo.
4. You may be up and about the day after surgery, but expect some fatigue and weakness for 2 to 3 days after surgery. This “hangover” like period is a normal reaction of the body to anesthesia, pain medications and the surgical procedure. Insomnia and even depression can occur for the same reasons immediately after surgery. Please realize that these symptoms are not abnormal, are invariably temporary and will resolve within a few days without medications.
5. Some of your sutures will be removed in my office around 6 to 7 days after surgery. The remaining sutures and staples will be removed 7 to 10 days after surgery. This is a painless procedure, so don't be concerned!

6. Use good common sense in restricting your normal activities during the first 14 days after your operation. Most persons will wait to resume work or social activities for at least this period of time. Any activity requiring heavy lifting or straining should be absolutely avoided! If you feel that you need to take a laxative to avoid straining in the bathroom, use one that you are accustomed to taking. All but the lightest of exercises should be avoided during the first 2 to 3 weeks.
7. Light walking can begin after 3 days. Light exercise (*easy* biking, *slow* jogging, golf) can be resumed after 3 weeks. Strenuous exercise and sports (aggressive skiing, running, mountain biking) should not be undertaken for 6 weeks.
8. When you move, stand or change positions, do so gently and carefully for the first 7 days. In turning your head, move the head and shoulders deliberately as a single unit (like a robot). Be particularly careful with pullover clothing so as not to injure the surgical areas. Exercise moderation in the amount of talking and smiling you do during this initial week of healing.
9. You may eat a normal diet the day following surgery. Select foods which are easily chewed. Observation of a low-salt diet will help reduce postoperative swelling significantly.
10. For the first 2 weeks after surgery, sleep on your back or side with your head elevated on at least 2 pillows. Keeping your head higher than your heart will help resolve swelling as early as possible. Do not sleep face down on your stomach.
11. DO NOT SMOKE for at least 2 weeks after surgery (and preferably 1 month)
12. DO NOT TAKE ASPIRIN, ANTI-INFLAMMATORY MEDICATIONS (such as MOTRIN or ADVIL) or take any products containing these blood thinning compounds for 14 days after surgery! Other routinely taken medications may be taken as necessary.
13. Any unexplained development of pain, facial swelling or fever should be reported to us immediately.
14. Some swelling and bruising of the face, neck, and/or forehead and brow is normal and unavoidable after lifts. The degree of this will vary widely from patient to patient, depending on each individual's unique tissue type and healing characteristics. Do not be concerned if you have more or less than others who have undergone the "same" operation. Although complete resolution of all swelling can take weeks, generally most patients appear quite socially acceptable within 10 to 14 days after surgery. Any bruising that occurs usually clears within the first 2 weeks.
15. Do not apply makeup to your incision lines until 7 days after surgery (once the sutures are removed). Prior to this, any makeup applied should be kept well clear of the healing incisions.

16. It is normal following a face, neck, or brow lift to have some numbness around incisions and the lifted portions of the face. This can last from several weeks up to 6 months and will usually return to normal as healing progresses. Some residual permanent numbness is a risk of any lift surgery, but uncommon. Avoid prolonged exposure to extremely cold temperatures. Be careful when using a hot blow dryer.
17. Healing incisions appear deep pink in color and have varying amounts of swelling and firmness around them. With the passage of time, the pink should become white and the firmness of the tissues will become soft and pliable. In the meantime, you can easily hide your incision lines with hair styling and makeup.
18. You should protect your incision lines and newly positioned tissues from excessive sunlight or tanning booth exposure. UV light tends to make scars more pink or red, which can take months to fade! Use sunscreens with a rating of at least 30 while outdoors.

Careful observation of these instructions will help ensure that your recovery is smooth, your surgical result optimal and your overall experience positive. We very much appreciate your confidence in allowing us to help you achieve your aesthetic surgical goals. If you should have any questions or concerns during your recovery, do not hesitate to call my office at 785-309-0900 or 1-866-760-0900.

Sincerely,

David A. Hendrick, M.D.

