

**Facelift Post-Operative Discharge Instructions**

**Diet:**

Resume your regular diet. Start slow and bland (crackers, toast), then work up to normal foods.

It is important to drink plenty of fluids so that you do not become dehydrated.

**Wound Care:**

Leave current dressings and chin strap in place until follow-up 24-48 hours after surgery. Your surgeon will likely have your follow-up in the office within this time so he can inspect the surgical site and incisions.

After this you will keep the new office dressings and chin strap in place for 3-4 days. If a drain was placed, this will likely be removed 3-5 days after your surgery.

5 days after surgery you can remove dressings at home and shower with indirect water onto your incision (soap and water can lightly run over area, but do not scrub, soak area or submerge under water). After your shower, gently pat area dry and apply antibiotic ointment.

Apply a light coat of antibiotic ointment to your incisions 4 times per day for 1 week after showering. Apply a pad and neck strap. This will be worn at all times (including sleeping) for the first week, and nightly for the second week.

Do NOT smoke or use tobacco products. It WILL impair your healing and increase your complications.

**Activity:**

Keep your head elevated 30-40 degrees at all times for 1 week. Use additional pillows or sleep in a reclining chair if necessary.

Avoid flexing your neck (looking down) for 2 weeks. Keep your neck extended (head back or straight) when sleeping to prevent wrinkling of the jaw line.

Avoid bending over, strenuous activity, exercise, or lifting anything greater than 5-10 pounds (a gallon of milk) until cleared at follow-up. Usually you can resume running/aerobic activities 4-6 weeks after your surgery.

Avoid activities that may risk injury to your surgical site.

No driving while taking narcotic pain medications.

**Medications:** See Patient Visit Summary for list of medications. Do not take pain medications on an empty stomach as this may increase nausea. Avoid Aspirin and NSAIDs (motrin, advil, ibuprofen, aleve) for the first week after surgery, then okay to start taking.

**Pain medication: You may be prescribed Percocet or Norco for postoperative pain unless allergic or intolerant.**

**Antibiotic: You may or may not have an antibiotic prescribed**

If you are taking narcotic pain medications you may experience some constipation. Drink plenty of water and eat plenty of fiber in your diet. Consider a fiber supplement such as Metamucil®, FiberCon®, or Citrucel®. It is okay to take over the counter stool softeners once or twice daily such as Docusate or Colace® found at your local drug store. It is also okay and recommended to take MiraLAX® to help relieve postop constipation for the first 1-2 weeks until you feel regular again. Milk of Magnesia and Magnesium Citrate are additional over the counter items that can help with temporary constipation.

**Other:**

Do not apply makeup until cleared by your surgeon at your follow-up  
Avoid wearing glasses or sunglasses for at least 1 week. Bring to your 1 week follow-up visit so your surgeon can monitor the fit in relation to your surgery and incisions.  
Avoid hairdryers for the first week  
No hair coloring for at least 2 weeks

**Follow up:** In 24-48 hours. Call office for specific appointment date and time if you do not already have one. You will have an additional follow-up in 2-3 days for drain removal (if present) or in 1 week if no drain.

**Office contact number: 314-501-9100**

**Results:**

It is common to have swelling and discoloration around your eyes, cheeks, and neck for up to 2-4 weeks after your surgery. Often your final result is not until 6-12 months postoperatively.

Your scars will initially be more prominent (reddish pink, or dark brown depending on your skin color) for the first few months. This will fade as you heal, and likely become nearly imperceptible. Slight unevenness, firm areas, or lumpiness will usually resolve as the scar matures.

Avoid sun exposure to your scar for 1 year after surgery. Wear sunscreen every day starting 3 weeks after surgery or as directed by your surgeon.

Silicone gel is very helpful to optimize scar recovery. Discuss this with the office at your follow-up.

**Other Instructions:**

**Should you experience any of these symptoms call the office:**

- Fever of 102 degrees Fahrenheit or greater
- Persistent pain, nausea, or vomiting.
- Persistent bleeding.
- Shortness of breath.
- Significant redness or drainage from your incision.
- Significant facial or neck swelling
- Any other questions or concerns.

**During business hours (9am – 4:30pm) call:**

Chesterfield Plastic Surgery Office: 314-501-9100

**On nights or weekends call:**

Hospital exchange: 866-830-0636

## General Postsurgical Instructions

You may expect to feel dizzy, weak, and drowsy for as long as 24 hours after receiving the medicine that made you sleep (*anesthetic*). The following information pertains to your recovery period for the first 24 hours following surgery.

**Do not** drive a car, ride a bicycle, participate in physical activities, or take public transportation until you are done taking narcotic pain medicines or as directed by your caregiver.

**Do not** drink alcohol or take tranquilizers.

**Do not** take medicine that has not been prescribed by your caregiver.

**Do not** sign important papers or make important decisions while on narcotic pain medicines. Have a responsible person with you.

Facelift PostOp Instructions  
Rev: 03/2024