

# Face Lift

## Post-Operative Instructions

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### What are my 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 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.

### What should my activity level be?

- 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.

## **How do I take care of my incision?**

- 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 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 hairdryers 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.

## **How should I expect to feel?**

- 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.

### **What will it look like?**

- 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.

### **What follow-up care will I receive?**

- Your 1<sup>st</sup> 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?**

- **Clinic Phone (734) 998-6022**

For questions and prescription refills please contact our clinic at during office hours (Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

- **Hospital Paging (734) 936-6267**

After hours and on weekends, call and ask for the Plastic Surgeon on call.

### **How do I manage my pain?**

#### **Pre-operative Instructions:**

- Prior to your surgery, pain medication will be prescribed by your Primary care physician or referring physician.
- If you **do not** have an established Primary care physician, please call the Physician referral service at **1-800-211-8181**.
- To establish yourself with a primary care physician **prior** to your surgery, please schedule an appointment with the new primary care physician.

#### **Post-operative Instructions:**

- 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's 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.

**Managing Prescription Refills:**

- Please call the clinic at **734-998-6022** for medication refills.
- You may also contact us using the Patient Portal at <https://www.myuofmhealth.org>
- Messages received after hours or on the weekend will be processed the next business day.
- Please allow 24 hours or one business day to have your request reviewed by your surgical team.

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