



FACE LIFT AND NECK LIFT POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

General Instructions

- After surgery, please have someone stay with you for the first 24 – 48 hours.
- Maintain a "*chin-up*" or "*open-neck*" position as much as able. Try to sleep flat, without pillows under the head. Avoid looking down for prolonged periods. Avoid neck flexion (bending neck forward) as able. The proper sitting position can be simulated by placing the *elbows on the knees*, looking forward.
- Drink water to stay hydrated. Eat a *softer, wetter diet* for the first week with *easy to swallow foods*.
- Beginning on post-operative day 1, gentle walking at least 5-6 times a day is recommended for general well-being and the prevention of blood clots. You may need assistance at first to prevent falls.
- No "pull-over" clothing for 7-10 days. Wear clothing that buttons at the front or zips.
- Do not lift anything over 5 lbs for 2 weeks. Avoid bending over for 2 weeks.
- You may resume light jogging at 4 weeks. You may resume higher intensity exercise at 6 weeks.
- Typically, most of the sutures are removed at 1 week and the remainder are removed at 2 weeks.

Medication Instructions

- Take medications as prescribed.
- Tylenol is recommended as the primary pain relief medication. Check the label on your bottle to remain aware of dosages. Opioids can be used for breakthrough pain. They should be weaned within 1 week. Take pain medication with food. Some patients only require Tylenol, but everyone is different. No more than 3 grams of Tylenol should be taken in 24-hour period.
- Do not take Ibuprofen, Aleve, Naproxen, Aspirin, or other NSAIDs for 1 week after surgery.
- You may develop constipation when taking opioid pain medications. Continue drinking plenty of fluids. Take Colace twice a day starting on day 1. You may take your preferred over the counter bowel regimen as well. You should have regular bowel movements. You should avoid straining.
- Do not drive while taking any opioid pain medication. Use caution with opioid medications as they have addictive potential. Do not use other sedative medications, sleep aids, or alcohol in the post-operative setting.

Wound Care and Dressings

- You may take a bath or shower 72 hours after surgery. You will remove all dressings, except the steri-strips after 72 hours, just before you bathe. Do not let the shower stream directly hit your face or neck. Although, you may let water gently run over your wound. Gentle baby shampoo is preferred in the first 2-3 weeks after surgery. Do not rub or scrub near the incisions. After bathing, gently pat dry. Then, place clean gauze under your chin and over your ears. Then, loosely place a head dressing/chin strap.
- Head wrap dressing will be worn 23 hours a day for 2 weeks, then at nighttime for 4 weeks.
- No pools, hot tubs, or submerging in bodies of water for 4 weeks.
- If steri-strips are covering your wound, leave these in place. If they fall off, you may leave them off.
- Do not pull or trim any visible suture strings. Do not pull on steri-strips.
- Eyeglasses can be worn after your surgery if you need them but use your dressings to support them. Do not place the glasses behind your ears as you normally would for at least 1 week.
- Only masks that tie behind the head should be worn for the first 2 weeks.

Call us if...

- If you are unable to keep fluids or medications down due to vomiting.
- If you have shaking chills, fever greater than 101.5 (F) degrees or 38 (C) degrees, increased redness, swelling or discharge from incision, chest pain, shortness of breath, or anything that is troubling you.
- For questions outside hours, call the main hospital line 617-667-7000. Ask to speak with plastic surgery.

Follow up

- Your first clinic follow-up after surgery will be within 1 week. If you do not have an appointment scheduled, please call the clinic to schedule an appointment.
- Please contact us for any serious change in your symptoms, or any new symptoms that concern you.
- The Plastic Surgery Clinic phone number is: 617-632-7827

Purchases to consider

- Tylenol
- Miralax or other bowel regimen to have on hand if you develop constipation
- Baby shampoo for gentle hair washing in the post-operative period
- Well balanced diet including vegetables and protein for the healing period. Softer foods are recommended. Wetter foods, rather than dry foods, are recommended. Eat things that are soft, wet, and easy to swallow.
- Button-up or zip-front tops to be worn in the post-operative period
- Masks that tie behind the head, rather than the masks with elastic straps that go behind the ears

