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## **Care after Facelift**

This page contains answers to frequently asked questions regarding your care after facelift. This information will help you to remember the instructions given to you after surgery.

### **What will I see when I look into a mirror?**

You will have a silicone dressing over the suture lines in front of and behind the ear and along the hairline, leave this and any dressing you may have in place until your first post- op appointment. You will have a drain sutured in place just below each ear. You may have bruising to the sides of your face, neck and under your chin. It takes several weeks for all the bruising and swelling to resolve.

### **When can I shower or take a bath?**

I ask that no showers are taken until the first post op appointment. Sponge baths are fine.

### **When can I wear make-up?**

We ask that you do not apply make up for 10 days. Avoid sun exposure, wear sunscreen with SPF of 30 or higher.

### **How do I care for my drains?**

Your drains are held in place with stitches to our skin and should always be supported to avoid pulling on the drain. The easiest method is to safety pin the drain bulb to your clothing. Record your drain amounts twice daily on the drain output record. Drains are generally removed within 3-5 days.

### **What can I do after surgery?**

On the day of surgery and for 2 days after, please avoid exertion, straining, bending or lifting. I encourage walking short distances. Avoid exercise until we discuss it at your first post op visit. Elevating your head by sleeping in a recliner or resting head on several pillows in bed will help minimize swelling and discomfort.

Depending on the type of work you do, you should be able to return to your job as soon as you are comfortable or approximately two weeks.

**When can I drive?**

You generally should be able to drive about 5-7 days after surgery if you feel up to it. You should not drive if you are still taking any narcotic pain medication.

**How much pain will I have?**

The most discomfort that you will have lasts 3-5 days, sometimes longer. As you feel more comfortable, your need for medication will be less.

**What medications should I use?**

I will prescribe a narcotic pain medication for you and may also have you take an antibiotic. Follow the directions on the bottle for their use. Do not take any added Tylenol. **In two days** it is recommended to take 600-800mg of Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) every 6-8 hours as needed.

**Can I drink alcohol?**

Do not drink alcohol for five days after your surgery or while taking narcotic pain meds.

**When will I be seen in the office after surgery?**

You will normally be seen in the office within 1 week of your surgery and then about 2 other times the first month. You will then be seen periodically to monitor healing. Additional appointments may be necessary.

**How will I know if I am having a problem?**

Urgent problems after facelift surgery do not occur frequently. These are the complications that will require a change in your post-operative care:

**Sudden loss of vision** or change in vision.

**Hematoma** (collection of blood under the skin) can occur within a few hours to a few days of your surgery. The warning signs are:

- Severe pain that does not respond to medication
- Significant swelling to an area on your face or neck - Excessive or growing bruising

**Infection** is rare following facelift surgery. Signs of infection are: -Increased temperature  
-Increasing redness, swelling or drainage from incisions

**Leg swelling** with or without associated pain may indicate a problem with the vein circulation in your leg(s). If you have a large amount of leg swelling (either in one or both legs) or if you experience pain in your legs contact the office immediately.

**Breathing problems** after facelift are rare but can be a serious complication. If you develop any chest pain or feeling of shortness of breath you must contact my office or be seen in the nearest emergency facility without delay.

**Medication reactions** may occur with the drugs prescribed for you. If you develop a skin rash, itching, vomiting, or diarrhea, stop taking your medication and call the office.

**If you have any of the above problems or other questions, contact my office. Ali Totonchi MD (216) 778-4450**