



**TOTONCHI**  
PLASTIC SURGERY

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### **Care after Facelift**

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

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

You will have Aquaphor ointment over the suture lines in front of and behind the ear and all along the surgical incisions. 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. You will have swelling. Occasionally, your eyes may be swollen shut for the first 2-3 days. Generally, this occurs when you combine an eye procedure with a facelift.

It takes several weeks for all the bruising and swelling to resolve.

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

We ask that no showers are taken until the first post op appointment. Sponge bathing is fine.

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

We ask that you do not apply make up for 2 weeks after surgery. After 2 weeks you may apply your make-up, avoiding application directly over incisions.

Avoid sun exposure and wear sunscreen with an SPF of 50+.

#### **How do I care for the incision?**

After surgery, you will have a layer of antibiotic ointment over the incision. It is better to reapply this ointment every 12 hours for up to 7 days after surgery.

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

Your drains are held in place with stitches to your 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. Monitor your drain amounts daily and record. Drains are generally removed 3-5 days after surgery.

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

On the day of surgery and for 5 days after, please avoid exertion, straining, bending, or lifting. We encourage walking short distances as early as the day of surgery. Avoid exercise until we discuss it at your first post op visit.

Elevating your head by sleeping in a recliner or resting your head up on several pillows while 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 in 2 weeks or as soon as you are comfortable.

### **When can I drive?**

You generally should be able to drive about 7 days after surgery if you feel up to it. You should not drive if you are still taking prescription 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 lessen. Overall, face lift surgery is not a very painful surgery. If you experience severe pain, you need call our office.

### **What medications should I use?**

We will prescribe a narcotic pain medication for you to take for your discomfort and we may prescribe an antibiotic. Follow the directions on the bottle for their use. Do not take any added Tylenol when taking prescription pain medication. Do not take Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or similar medications 2 weeks prior and up to 2 weeks after surgery.

Based on you blood pressure level, you might be given blood pressure medication to reduce the chance of bleeding, so it is recommended to have to have a blood pressure cuff at home.

### **Can I drink alcohol?**

Do not drink alcohol for 5 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 2-5 days of your surgery and then about 2 other times within 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:

**Vision problems:** Sudden 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
- 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 shortness of breath, you must contact our 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 at 440-461-7999.