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Care after Submental Lipectomy

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

What will I see when I look in the mirror?

Swelling and bruising are to be expected. You may have bruising and swelling in the neck area.

Keep all dressings that have been placed on you at the time of surgery intact until you are seen at your first post-operative appointment on the next day after surgery. The dressings stay in place for up to 2-3 days depending on when your drainage tube is removed. Please keep the dressing clean and dry.

You will have one drain coming out from behind the ear that will be sutured in place. The drain will stay in place for 3-5 days. Please see the drain information form for review of drain care.

The incision will be repaired with very fine sutures under the chin. These sutures will dissolve on their own. You will have a bandage covering the incision that should remain in place for 1 week after surgery and fall off on its own. Apply bacitracin ointment to the incision twice daily for 1 week. Remove old bacitracin before applying new bacitracin.

When can I shower or take a bath?

You can bathe normally, be sure to keep the drain site and any dressings around the face and chin dry.

Do not shower until dressings have been removed at your post op visit.

What can I do after surgery?

You should take it easy for several days after surgery and gradually increase your activity as you feel more comfortable.

You should sleep in a semi-reclined position for 1 week after surgery to minimize swelling.

You should NOT do any heavy lifting, greater than 5-10 lb, or strenuous exercise for 3 weeks. You can restart your exercise regime gradually, as tolerated, 3 weeks after your surgery.

When can I drive?

You can drive if you have stopped taking prescription pain relievers and after the drain is removed. DO NOT drive while taking prescription pain medication or with the drains in place.

How much pain will I have after surgery?

The most discomfort you will have lasts the first 2-3 days after surgery.

You will be given a prescription for pain medication, take it as directed, if needed for pain. The medication may make you feel drowsy so please have someone assist you at home for the first few days after surgery.

Do not take any Aspirin, Advil, Motrin, or Aleve for 3 weeks before surgery and avoid for 1 week after surgery.

When can I drink alcohol?

You can drink alcohol 7 days after your procedure if you are no longer taking pain medication.

When will I be seen in the office after surgery?

You will normally be seen in the office 1 day after surgery, then 3-5 days after surgery to monitor and remove the drain, then at 1 month and 6 months to monitor healing.

How will I know if I am having a problem?

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 in an isolated area
- Excessive bruising in one area compared to another

Infection Signs of infection are:

- Increased redness around the incisions
- Increased drainage from the incisions
- Increased temperature/fever

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 with or without chest pain, seek medical attention immediately.

Medication reactions may occur with the drugs prescribed for you. If you develop a skin rash, itching, vomiting, or diarrhea, or other concerns, 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.