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Postoperative Facelift/Necklift Instructions

1. Take medications as directed. **DO NOT** mix alcohol and medications. **DO NOT** take aspirin or any medications containing aspirin for two weeks. If you are taking an antibiotic, be sure to finish it.
2. Elevate your head on at least two pillows until your doctor allows you to lay flat. Do not turn your neck for the first seven days after surgery. Turn your entire body instead. This will enhance the skin adhering to the underlying muscle and prevent fluid **accumulation and bleeding**. Many patients find that rolling up a bath towel like a cigarette and then wrapping this around your neck immobilizes the neck nicely. You may move the neck 45 degrees to each side beginning one week post op. Do not drive until you can move your neck normally.
3. Avoid any activity that causes an elevation in blood pressure. This includes exercise, straining at bowel movements, sex and even stressful situations. Elevated blood pressure can lead to bleeding requiring surgery.
4. A partially frozen bag of peas or anything cold applied to the face works well to help reduce swelling around the eyes for the first 48–72 hours. **DO NOT PUT ICE ON THE NECK OR CHEEKS, JUST THE EYES.**
5. The second day after surgery you may remove your dressing and wash your hair. You should clean the incisions with peroxide or soap and water to remove any crusts that have formed, and then apply antibiotic ointment to the incision lines. Incisions in the hair do not need ointment. Use only Vaseline/Aquaphor on eye incisions. Any small bleeding produced by cleaning is not unusual and can be easily stopped by gentle pressure.
6. Make up may be worn after 7 days, but not on the incision lines until all the crusts are gone. Remove the make up very gently to avoid irritation.
7. You may have a regular diet, but soft foods are best at first, such as grits, scrambled eggs, etc. Diets with low salt and high protein will minimize swelling. High carbohydrate and high salt diets will increase swelling. Opening the mouth wide and foods that require more aggressive chewing should be avoided as this can lead to **bleeding**.
8. If you are a smoker, it is absolutely essential that you do not smoke. Smoking retards healing and will cause severe healing problems during recovery because it reduces the circulation. Smoking can cause permanent scarring from open wounds that would not occur except from smoking. Second hand smoke also applies.
9. Report any severe or one-sided swelling and/or excessive bleeding.
10. On your return visit postoperatively; be sure to bring a scarf with you, as this will definitely be a "bad hair day"!
11. We do not recommend coloring your hair or having a "permanent" for six weeks following face/browlifting.
12. Sunscreen is essential to prevent skin discoloration for the first twelve months after surgery. This may be started when all the crusts are gone. Retin-A may be restarted with your doctor's permission.
13. Move your legs and feet often to prevent dangerous blood clots in the legs. Taking big breaths and coughing will restore normal lung function after anesthesia.
14. Pain medicine will cause constipation. Do not strain when attempting to move your bowels. Straining can cause bleeding in the wound for up to a week after surge a stool softener like Metamucil or Colace immediately after surgery.
15. Activities that we do not want you to do are 1) turning your head, 2) opening your mouth wide, 3) laying flat, 4) any activity that elevates your heart rate and thus your blood pressure, 5) straining to do anything including bowel movements.
16. Please call our office if you have any questions and to schedule your first post-op visit on _____.