

## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS - FACELIFT

Recovery from facelift requires time, patience, and adherence to basic post-operative care instructions. You are expected to have swelling, bruising, some differences on two sides, some oozing of blood from incision sites, and pain. We will go over some of these issues in these instructions. If you have any other questions or concerns, please feel free to call me (713-962-8876) or email me (elee@nuveauplasticsurgery.com).

- **Activities:** Restrict your activities the day of surgery and several days afterwards. It is not unusual to require **7 to 10 days** before you are feeling back to normal, and before you can resume physical activity.
  - **Elevation.** It is important to keep your head elevated, even when you are sleeping. Bending over, lifting heavy weights, and lying down for a long period of time will result in more swelling during the first week of the surgery. Also, it could elevate the blood flow at your incision site, resulting in bleeding. So it is recommended that patients use more pillows to keep their head up while sleeping, and stay up as much as possible.
- **Diet:** Start with clear liquids (ie water, juice, clear broth/soup on first night after surgery). Advance as tolerated to regular diet. Make sure you don't feel nauseated.
- **Medications:** You are prescribed antibiotics (Bactrim), anti-nausea medication (Zofran / ondansetron) and pain medication (Norco or hydrocodone/acetaminophen). Please take medications as prescribed. The anti-nausea and pain medications are on as-needed basis. You may also choose to take stool softener (Colace, Reglan) as needed for constipation. Also Arnica should help with the bruising. Please take it as instructed.
- **Incision care:** Apply antibiotic ointment three times daily to all incisions for up to five days, then switch to Vaseline. Using the ointment longer can irritate the skin. If the incision appears to be too dry, you may apply more frequently. It is helpful to use Q-tip to apply the ointment.
- **Drain care:** You will have drains coming out behind your ears. These will stay in for 5 days. Please keep the bulb on suction (as instructed at the hospital), strip the drains and record output 3 times a day.
- **Shower:** You may take a shower and get the incision wet starting the first day after surgery. Wash your face at least twice a day with gentle soap and water. Pat dry (do not wipe). Use Q-tip moistened with water to clean around the incision to remove any crusting or blood.
- **Ice packing.** For the first 1-2 days, the swelling will become more severe due to blood flowing into the eyelid. This is our body's own mechanism to treat injuries or incisions. However, controlling the amount of swelling for the first 72 hours is *critical* and will determine your recovery period. More swelling you develop during this period will only slowly and gradually reduce for several days.

- **What to avoid:**
  - Make-up: Avoid putting make-up for first 1-2 weeks after surgery, especially around the incisions.
  - Strenuous exercises
  - Sudden movements of your head and neck
- **Have patience!**
  - After the surgery, you may not see the result right away, and this may be stressful. However, remember that after the long period of waiting and patience, you will achieve beautiful results!
- **Follow-up:** Return to clinic on post-operative days 5 and 7 for suture removal.