

# POST SURGERY CARE INSTRUCTIONS:

## Facelift/Neck Lift (+/- Browlift)

\*These instructions apply to most individuals. We may modify our recommendations to you, depending on your specific needs. Please follow these instructions UNLESS we notify you in writing to do something different. \*

### **LYMPHATIC MASSAGE**

For the best results, lymphatic massage is recommended for all facelift and neck lift patients. You can get lymphatic massage with drains in. After surgery, the lymphatic system can become overwhelmed resulting in increased swelling and discomfort. Manual lymphatic massage gently "wakes up" the lymph nodes, resulting in decreased swelling and faster healing. **You should start lymphatic massage 2-3 days post-op and schedule a minimum of 6 sessions. You may have 1-2 lymphatic massage sessions per week.** We have handouts for companies we trust and recommend in your black folder.

### **WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SURGERY**

#### Bruising and Swelling:

- Bruising and swelling is expected and usually peaks at 48-72 hours and significantly decreases around days 5-10.
- Minor swelling can last for 8 weeks, or longer. THIS IS NORMAL.
- Use ice packs or a cool compress to neck/cheeks/eyes for comfort and to reduce swelling for the first 24 hours. DO NOT put ice on incisions.
- DO NOT place ice directly on the skin. If no bandages are present, place a cloth or towel between the skin and the ice pack to protect your skin.

#### Tightness:

- A feeling of facial or neck tightness is expected after face or neck surgery
- It is important that you keep your head/chin up if you are standing or sitting upright. This will help alleviate some of the tightness you experience around your neck.
- If you had a brow lift, you may experience tightness in the forehead or brow for up to 4-6 weeks postop.

#### Numbness:

- Numbness is expected after facial surgery.
- Numbness can last for up to 18 months in some areas

#### Skin Texture:

- As swelling recedes, you will become aware that your skin texture feels different from usual. This is NORMAL. It will take 2 to 3 months to have the texture feel soft and pliable again.

### **SAFETY / CAREGIVER**

After surgery, you will be weak and drowsy. You will need a responsible ADULT caregiver to stay with you 48-72 hours after surgery to monitor your health and support you.

### **MEDICATION SAFETY**

Dr. Camp uses a multimodal pain medication regimen to help keep pain tolerable and our patients comfortable. Stay ahead of the pain for the first 24 hours by following the schedule of medications outlined on your medication chart. After 48 hours, Dr Camp recommends avoiding the use of narcotics like hydrocodone (norco) and muscle relaxers such as valium. Continue taking Celecoxib (Celebrex) and Gabapentin every 12hours to maintain comfort. **Constant, severe, worsening pain should be reported to our office immediately.**

It is important to take the medications as prescribed. DO NOT drive while taking narcotics, muscle relaxers or any medication that causes drowsiness. Additionally, DO NOT drink alcohol while still taking any of the prescription medications.

## **POSITION AND ACTIVITY**

**HEAD POSITION:** Keep your head elevated at all times for 3 weeks, to reduce swelling. When lying in bed or recliner, do not use multiple pillows under your head (this can tilt your head forward). Instead, use a wedge pillow to keep your head/neck/ spine straight in a line.

**NECK POSITION:** Do NOT flex the neck. Avoid looking down, keeping the neck straight to prevent creasing or slow healing. No bending over or lifting. If you must bend down, bend at the knees only, keeping your head up.

**FACIAL MOVEMENTS:** Minimize talking or facial movements.

**REST:** Rest is important in the early stages of healing. Take care of no one else and let others tend to you.

**WALK:** It is also important that you are ambulatory, meaning that you are walking under your own strength. During the day, spend 10 minutes every hour engaged in light walking indoors as you recover.

### **ACTIVITY:**

#### **WEEKS 1 - 3**

- For the first 3 weeks post-op, walk as much as you'd like indoors
- Avoid raising your heart rate over 100 or increasing your blood pressure
- No sweating

#### **WEEKS 3 – 6**

- You may ease back into light daily activities and hygiene as you normally would. Listen to your body and avoid stretching or motions that cause too much pain. Your normal range of motion will return as you heal.
- You may increase activity with faster walking
- No "exercise" or high impact activity (biking, elliptical, weights or resistance training)
- Avoid vigorous household activities like vacuuming, house cleaning, etc.
- Do not lift, push, or pull anything greater than 10lbs

#### **After 6 WEEKS**

- Expect your energy to return to normal 6-8 weeks after surgery
- Ease back into physical activity, starting very light and increasing frequency and intensity gradually over 3-6 months, depending on your health, physical stamina and pre-operative level of fitness.
- There is no weight limit but listen to your body. Discomfort is your body telling you to back off.

**SUN EXPOSURE:** Avoid sun exposure for 6 weeks. Treated areas are more likely to sunburn for up to 1 year. Wear a hat to keep your face and neck out of the sun. You will begin wearing the provided skin care with sunscreen once your stitches are removed.

## **DEEP BREATHING**

Practicing deep breathing after surgery will help strengthen and clear your lungs, lowering the risk of postoperative pneumonia. Inhale through your nose and slowly exhale through your mouth.

## **NUTRITION**

Adequate fluid and nutritional intake are CRITICAL for proper healing. You may not feel hungry after surgery. It is essential that you spread your required fluid and nutritional intake evenly throughout the day to ensure you get everything you need. Protein intake is EXTREMELY important for wound healing. We recommend 70-90gms of protein daily after surgery. Start with a liquid diet like protein shakes, smoothies, and broth and if tolerated, advance to soft foods.

**Eat soft foods for the first week after surgery,** such as soup, pasta, yogurt, Jello. Avoid foods that require chewing for 1 week, such as hard breads, meats, cheeses, burgers, pizza, tacos, etc. After 1 week, you may eat a regular diet. Limit carbonated beverages and spicy foods that can cause gas and bloating. Avoid salty foods which will increase swelling.

## **BLOOD CLOT PREVENTION**

**WALK:** It is essential that during the day you get up EVERY HOUR and walk around indoors for 10 minutes while you recover.

**SEQUENTIAL COMPRESSION DEVICES (SCDs):** If you received portable Sequential Compression Devices (SCDs), please wear them when you are not actively up and walking for 2 weeks after your surgery. It is especially important to wear them at night, be sure to charge

them before bed.

**LOVENOX:** You may be prescribed Lovenox injections for up to a week or more. You will be instructed when to start this and where to inject by the recovery room RN upon discharge. You may be told to NOT start the medication if you are noted to bleed easily in surgery. WATCH THIS LINK FOR INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE you give the first shot! Please watch this video so that you know how to use it. <http://www.lovenox.com/>. DO NOT INJECT LOVENOX INTO THE ABDOMEN AFTER A TUMMY TUCK/ ABDOMINOPLASTY OR ABDOMINAL LIPOSUCTION. Do not inject into or near a surgical area or you can cause permanent damage to the surgical site. Always do injections exactly 24hrs apart

## **SHOWERING AND HYGIENE**

You may shower after your first post-op appointment, approximately 1-3 days after surgery. Have someone help you in case you become lightheaded. We recommend taking the prescribed nausea medication 30 minutes before your first shower.

- To shower:
  1. If you have drains, use a lanyard or tie a clean shoelace around your neck and attach drain bulb clips to it. This will keep the drains out of the way while you shower.
  2. Take a warm, not hot shower.
  3. Do not take a bath or swim.
  4. Wash your face with the facewash provided.
  5. **Gently wash over and around the incision sites with the Hibiclens soap provided for the first week after surgery to reduce the risk of infection.** Do not avoid incisions — apply Hibiclens with your fingers with gentle circular motion around the areas and rinse.
  6. Wash your hair, if desired, with your own shampoo and conditioner
  7. Gently pat skin and dry with a clean towel.
  8. Do NOT apply lotion, powder or creams to your incisions or surgical area unless directed by our office.
- Do NOT tease or pull on hair for 3 weeks so that the hair follicles near incisions are damaged.
- Begin skin care regimen with products provided once sutures are removed.
- Wear facial sunscreen provided daily once sutures are removed.
- DO NOT wear makeup for 4 weeks.
- DO NOT wear glasses for 4 weeks. You may wear contact lenses.
- DO NOT tweeze, wax, or bleach facial hair for 4 weeks.
- DO NOT dye or color your hair for 4 weeks.
- DO NOT wear earrings for 6 weeks.
- Avoid dental work for 6 weeks.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Avoid tops that must be pulled over your head until your drains have been removed. Tops that button or zip up are ideal for the first few days of recovery.

## **SURGICAL DRESSINGS AND SUTURES**

You will wake up from surgery with a soft padded wrapping surrounding your head. The wrapping will be removed at your first post-op appointment, approximately 48 hours after surgery. Sutures are typically removed in our office in 7-14 days. DO NOT REMOVE SUTURES ON YOUR OWN.

## **DRAINS**

- You may or may not have drains, which typically stay in for 1-5 days.
- The purpose of a drain is to get fluid out so it doesn't accumulate in the body – better out than in!
- Upon discharge you will receive instructions on emptying drains and caring for them. GLOVES MUST BE WORN BY PATIENT AND CARETAKER WHEN EMPTYING DRAINS.
- Remember to write totals of drainage amounts on your drain log. You will bring the drain logs to your post-op appointment. The amount of drainage determines when the drains come out!
- Once drain tubes are removed, you may wash your hair and face.

## **CONSTIPATION PROTOCOL**

You may not have a bowel movement for several days after surgery, this is normal. Constipation can be prevented by staying

hydrated, moving, and taking MiraLAX 4x/day in a liquid of your choice. MiraLAX does not cause cramping and is very safe/effective. Diarrhea can be caused by antibiotics taken postoperatively- please notify us if you experience this.

### **URINATION**

We want you to urinate within 4 hours of surgery. Ideally, you should urinate at least twice before you go to bed the evening of surgery. If you are not able to urinate, please notify us ASAP.

### **NURSE PHONECALL**

Your post-op nurse will call you the day after your surgery. Please answer so we can make sure you are healing normally and answer any questions you may have that are not covered in the post-op instructions. We want to speak to you. We are also happy to speak with your caregiver, but we want to hear your voice and have you answer our post-op questions. Please write down all your questions and save your questions for this call. Our RNs have scheduled time to check on our immediate post-op patients.

### **QUESTIONS AFTER SURGERY**

Steven Camp MD Plastic Surgery

Phone: (817) 228-4315

Text: (817) 646-6991

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm

For post-op questions, please call or text the office and leave a message for our post-op nurse. Please note there may be delays in getting back to you with non-urgent questions as our RNs are in clinic treating patients during the week. Social media should NOT be used to contact us regarding your care. ***Prior to calling, please review your post-op instructions to ensure your question is not already answered.***

### **EMERGENCIES & AFTER-HOURS**

**IF YOU GO TO THE HOSPITAL OR URGENT CARE, PLEASE CALL (817) 646-6991 TO LET US KNOW.**

**NONURGENT:** For nonurgent and routine post-op questions after business hours, please TEXT OR CALL THE OFFICE AND LEAVE A VOICEMAIL. We will contact you within 24 hours regarding non-urgent matters.

#### ***NONURGENT issues include:***

- Medication refill requests
- Routine post-op questions
- Appointment scheduling

**URGENT:** For urgent, non-life-threatening medical issues or concerns, please CALL OUR OFFICE IMMEDIATELY to be connected to our after-hours emergency line. The after-hours emergency line rings directly to Dr. Steven Camp and Sara Camp AG-ACNP, APRN, MSN. If they do not answer, please leave a detailed voice message. They are most likely on another call and will contact you immediately.

#### ***URGENT issues include:***

- Surgical drain issues
- Fever of 101 or greater
- Allergic reaction to medications
- Increasing swelling or redness around the incision
- Drainage from incision that is yellow or green
- Drainage from incision that has a foul odor
- Severe pain that is not relieved by medications
- Severe nausea or vomiting that is not relieved by medications

**EMERGENCY:** If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, CALL 911 OR GO TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM

IMMEDIATELY. While we cannot provide immediate assistance, we ask that you update us once you are safe.

**EMERGENT issues include:**

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chest pain
- Loss of consciousness
- Calf pain or tenderness, lower leg/calf swelling, one leg more swollen than the other • Uncontrolled bleeding

**COMMON QUESTIONS**

**Jewelry/Piercings:** If you have piercings, you can have non-metal spacers placed before you arrive at the surgery center, as long as the piercing area is a NON-SURGICAL area. Otherwise, not even a spacer is allowed.

**Menstrual Cycle:** What if I'm on my period the day of surgery? This will NOT hinder you from having surgery. Please wear a pad (not a tampon) to surgery. You will be provided with pads and disposable underwear at the surgery center.

**Exercise:** See 'Activity Section' for details. Doing so earlier can mess up your results and prolong healing.

**SEX:** Refrain from sex for at least 4-6 weeks after surgery. Resume with caution and avoid pressure or rubbing on surgical sites.

**Swimming/Baths:** AVOID for at least 6 weeks after surgery. All your incisions must be COMPLETELY healed and closed before you do this. Doing so before incisions are healed after 6 weeks can result in a bad infection! This includes lakes, oceans, hot tubs, pools, and bath water.

**Scar Treatments:** When incisions are completely closed (typically 1-2 weeks post-op), our nurse will direct you to start using Silicone Scar Strips or silicone scar gel- apply with clean hands. Scar Away is a good over the counter brand. You can get these products at CVS, Walgreens, Wal-Mart, or on Amazon. You may start applying scar strips for 12 hrs. on, then 12 hrs. off every day. Scar gel may be applied every 12 hours. Continue using it for several months after surgery.

**Post-Operative Travel:** Typically, we recommend not traveling for at least 6 weeks for vacations! Necessary travel before this time should be done cautiously, taking care to adhere to lifting and activity restrictions to avoid complications. This is the timeframe in which you have the highest risk of getting an infection or an incision opening up.

**Alcohol:** Avoid alcohol for 2 weeks before surgery and at least 2 weeks after surgery. You must be off all your medications for at least ONE full week before you drink alcohol. Alcohol is NOT good for healing!

**Smoking:** No smoking or second-hand exposure to smoke for AT LEAST 6 weeks after surgery. Exposure to smoking in any form delays wound healing and increases your risk of post-op complications.

**Tanning:** Avoid excessive sun exposure 10 days prior to surgery. If you have a sunburn, surgery may have to be delayed. Avoid direct sun exposure of surgical site skin for at least 6 weeks after surgery. Sunblock with UVA/ UVB protection SPF 35 or greater is recommended to protect skin with any sun exposure. Note: bathing suits and thin clothing offer minimal sun protection. You should always apply sunblock under such garments.

**Spray Tan:** Avoid for 2 weeks prior to surgery and for 6 weeks after surgery.

**Tattoos:** Avoid for 6 weeks before surgery and 3 months after surgery to decrease the risk of infection.

**Pets:** No pets sleeping in your bed for 6 weeks. Do not walk large dogs with a leash for 6 weeks after surgery.

**Nails:** Do not replace dip, gel, or acrylic nails until cleared by your nurse.

**Should I search online or ask my friends if I have any questions about my procedure or recovery?** You know the answer to this one! Google "experts," reading social media "expert groups" or asking your friend that had plastic surgery causes a lot of problems and unnecessary anxiety. Please call us if you have any questions or concerns. Dr. Camp is a board-certified plastic surgeon with nearly 10 years in private practice. It is dangerous to attempt to diagnose yourself or depend on the advice of bloggers, social media sites or friends and family. We are here to help, ask us anything!