TOTONCHI
PLASTIC SURGERY

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 after surgery.

Appearance:

- You will have 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 mild swelling. Occasionally, your eyes may be swollen shut for the first 2-3 days if you have eyelid surgery in combination with a facelift.
- It takes a few weeks for all the bruising and swelling to resolve.
- 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.
- Please avoid wearing glasses for 3 weeks. If glasses are needed, please speak with nursing for instruction on how to protect your incisions.
- Please avoid exposure to extreme cold weather, cold water and ice on your face for 1-2 weeks.

Activity/Bathing/Sleeping:

- Please avoid exertion, straining, bending, or lifting over 5 lbs for 3 weeks after surgery.
- We encourage walking short distances as early as the day of surgery.
- Depending on the type of work you do, you should be able to return to your job in 10 days or as soon as you are comfortable.
- You may drive when you are no longer taking narcotic pain medication and feel comfortable.
- We ask that no showers are taken until the first post op appointment. Sponge bathing is fine. Avoid hot and cold water.
- 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.

Drain/Incision Care:

- Clean your incisions with a Q-tip and warm water, then apply bacitracin to your incisions at least twice a day.
- After 1 week, please switch from bacitracin to Aquaphor or moisturizing lotion.
- Avoid sun exposure and wear sunscreen with an SPF of 50+ to your incisions if they will be exposed to sun for 1 week after surgery.
- Your drains are held in place with stitches to your skin and should always be supported to avoid pulling on the drain.

- **Monitor your drain amounts daily and record. Please bring the drain sheet to your all of your post op appointments. The "How to care for your drain" pamphlet has more detailed information.**
- Drains are generally removed in 3-5 days.

Diet:

- We recommend a diet consisting of high protein and easily digestible foods (i.e. toast, rice, bananas, eggs, chicken, oatmeal, protein shakes, etc.)
- Do not drink alcohol for a couple weeks after your surgery or while taking narcotic pain medicines
- Limit your salt intake to help decrease swelling.
- Please refer to the "Medications and Foods to Avoid" List provided in your Pre-Surgical email sent

Medication:

- We will prescribe an antibiotic, nausea medication, and pain medication for you. Follow the directions on the bottles for their use.
- The pain medication may make you feel drowsy, so please have someone assist you at home.
- A stool softener (Colace) is recommended after surgery.
- 3-5 days after surgery, most patients will find that Tylenol will take care of the discomfort.
- Do not use aspirin, ibuprofen (Motrin) or other NSAID medication for 7-10 days after surgery.
- **You will be asked to monitor you blood pressure after your operation. It is recommended to have a blood pressure cuff at home. Take your blood pressure 3 times a day. Dr. Totonchi will advise when to treat your blood pressure. One clonidine tablet can be taken once every 8 hours.**

Post-Operative Appointments:

- 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.

Recommended Supplies:

- Q-tips, Bacitracin, and Aquaphor
- Extra Pillows for comfort

We are always available if you have any questions, please call 440-461-7999.

Post-Operative Concerns: Urgent problems after facelift surgery do not occur frequently. These are the complications that will require a change in your post-operative care:

- **Swelling:** Mild swelling is to be expected. If you have excessive swelling, please call the office.
- **Vision:** Sudden change or loss of 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, redness, swelling or drainage from incisions
- **Leg swelling** 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** If you develop any chest pain or shortness of breath, you must contact the 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.

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For educational content, practice updates, and patient resources, follow Dr. Ali Totonchi on social media and visit our website:

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