

# Face and Neck lift

## Patient Care Instructions

### ***General Information***

A facelift is a procedure that helps tighten the skin in the face and reduce the appearance of wrinkles. It can also help define the neck. During the surgery, excess skin is removed, underlying muscles are tightened, and the skin is redraped. This helps to improve sagging facial skin, jowls, and loose neck skin. The neck lift, or platysmaplasty, is a surgical procedure which effectively rejuvenates the neck by tightening and re-suspending the muscles of the neck. This helps to decrease the appearance of “bands” in the neck, as well as sagging skin beneath the jawline for a firmer, more defined jawline and neck.

### ***Pre-Operative Guidelines***

Smoking should be stopped a minimum of 4 weeks prior to surgery. Smoking should be avoided for at least 6 weeks after surgery as well. Smoking can greatly interfere with healing and lead to postoperative complications.

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery. This includes no water, gum or hard candy. Blood pressure and/or heart medications can be taken with a sip of water as directed by your prescribing physician.

If you take medication for diabetes, then confirm with your prescribing physician how to manage these medications prior to surgery.

If you are prone to nausea or motion sickness let your anesthesiologist know on the day of surgery. Medications can be started prior to surgery or during surgery to help improve your postoperative experience.

### ***Post-Operative Instructions***

Take pain medications and muscle as directed. Do not drink alcohol with these medications. Do not take pain medicines on an empty stomach.

You may resume all your home medicines as you normally take them.

Take a stool softener/laxative, such as Colace, Biscodyl, or Milk of Magnesia, until bowels begin to function normally after surgery. A combination of anesthesia and pain medication usually makes this necessary for a few days.

Do not smoke or be around smoking as even secondhand smoke delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

You may resume a normal diet after surgery. Do follow a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids.

### ***Activity Restrictions***

It is important for you to keep your head elevated the evening after surgery as well as for the first two weeks following surgery. This can be done by either sleeping in a recliner tilted at 45 degrees or sleeping with two pillows underneath the head. Avoid rolling onto your face. Sleeping on your back for the first two weeks after surgery helps to ensure this.

No head turning activities for four weeks. Hair coloring should be delayed for four weeks after surgery. No “pull-over” clothing for two weeks.

Avoid hard chewing foods, yawning or wide mouth opening for two weeks.

No driving for one, preferably two weeks after surgery.

Light cardiovascular exercise can be resumed after 4 weeks and all other activities at 6 weeks.

Please refrain from any strenuous activity. Absolutely no jogging, swimming, or lifting anything more than 5-10 lbs. for 6 weeks.

### ***Incision Care***

You may shower the second day following surgery and should shower every day following this. Be sure to use a gentle shampoo such as Johnson’s Baby Shampoo.

Be sure to report immediately any signs of bleeding that persist after ten minutes of direct pressure, infection, redness, fever, unusual drainage, or pain.

Stitches and staples will be removed at the one week point except for one stitch, which will remain in the ear lobe until day ten to fourteen.

### ***Post-Operative Expectations***

You can expect some discomfort and swelling after your surgery. The discomfort should subside within one to two weeks. However, it may take several weeks for the swelling to subside.

Keep your head elevated as much as possible over the first two to three weeks to help reduce swelling; avoid bending over or heavy lifting for the first three weeks, and avoiding prolonged sun exposure for the first two to three months.

Bruising and discoloration should resolve over the first two weeks.

Most of your face will be numb following surgery. This is normal and will subside over the coming weeks to months. Unusual sensations, pins and needles, and occasionally mild discomfort may occur as these nerves regenerate over time.

Most patients are able to return to work in two weeks.

### ***When to Call the Office***

If you have severe pain not relieved by pain medication.

If you have any side effects from medication: rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.

If you have fever over 101.

If you have yellow or green drainage from an incision or notice foul odor.

If the yellow fluid under the Integra becomes cloudy or the Integra turns black.

For medical questions please call 817-702-9100.

### ***Follow-up Care and Appointments***

You will be seen approximately 5 days after your surgery. If for some reason you do not have an appointment scheduled, please call 817-702-9100.