

FACELIFT

PRE/POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- Please advise the doctor if you are taking any blood thinning medication (e.g. Warfarin, Disprin, Aspirin, etc.)
- This will need to be discontinued prior to surgery as per doctor's instructions.
- Uncontrolled high blood pressure raises the risk of bleeding complications in all forms of surgery - please ensure your blood pressure is well controlled prior to your surgical date.
- DO NOT take any of the following medications prior to surgery:
 - Anti-inflammatories (e.g. Brufen, Ibuprofen, Myprodol, Voltaren, etc.)
 - Homeopathic medications (e.g. Arnica, Rescue Remedy, St John's Wort)
 - Vitamin E (oral or topical)
- Prepare your skin for 3 weeks before surgery with Dermalac Lotion and Vitamin A, C & E Body Oil from Environ.
- Take a bath or shower with antibacterial soap (or Bioscrub) on the morning of your admission.
- Do not apply any body lotion.
- Regardless of whether you are having a general anaesthetic or conscious sedation - you should not eat or drink anything for 6 hours prior to surgery.
- If you are a smoker - NO SMOKING for 3 months prior to surgery.
- Bring comfortable cotton underwear.

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- You will overnight at our Recovery Retreat across the road from Somerset Surgery.
- You will be transported with a registered ambulance service (EMO) from the recovery ward to the Recovery Retreat. You will have a trained nurse with you for the first 24 hours after your surgery.
- You will need someone to drive you home after your surgery and help you for 1 to 2 days.
- You will need plenty of rest.
- Decreased activity and pain medication may promote constipation, so you may want to add more fruit and fibre to your diet.
- Be sure to increase your fluid intake.
- Take pain medication as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

ACTIVITIES

- Start walking as soon as possible – this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any pain medications.
- You may tire easily. Plan on taking it easy for the first week.
- No strenuous activities, including sex and heavy housework, for at least 2 weeks (walking and mild stretching are fine).
- You will be able to return to work within 14 to 21 days.

INCISION CARE

- You may bath 48 hours after surgery. Avoid steam baths and saunas for several months.
- You may shower only after your post-operative appointment (usually 4 days post-operatively).
- Avoid exposing your scars to the sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use sunblock – regardless of the weather – if you plan to go outdoors or not.
- Keep incisions clean and inspect through Micropore daily for signs of infection or oozing.
- **DO NOT USE ANY CREAMS CONTAINING VITAMIN E TO TREAT THE INCISION AREAS FOR THE FIRST 3 MONTHS.**
- Keep Steri-Strips on (until doctor says they are no longer necessary).
- Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.
- Do not cut any stitches shorter.
- Keep head elevated – sleep with your head propped up.
- Do not use hair dye or have highlights until approved by doctor (usually 6 weeks post-operatively).
- You may use cold compresses for comfort and to help decrease the swelling.
- Hair may be washed on the fourth day post-operatively.
- The area of the sutures may be gently washed to loosen any blood clots in the hair.
- Do not set hair dryer temperature on hot, as you may not have feeling in operated areas.
- You may use make-up after the sutures are removed. Be sure to use uncontaminated (new) make-up sponges when applying foundation to cover bruising. Take care to avoid applying makeup over the incisions. It is important to gently remove all make-up with the recommended facial cleanser – splashed off with warm water.
- You may follow your usual skincare routine – taking care to avoid applying any creams containing Vitamin E on the incision areas.
- ScarScience, available from MASC Laser Clinic, should be applied from 6 weeks post-operatively and directly on the incision for another 3 months post-operatively.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Discomfort will be maximal in the first 3 days, improving each day thereafter.
- Bruising, swelling, numbness, tightness and tenderness of the skin can last for 10 to 14 days or longer.
- You may experience tightness in the neck and jaw, as well as have difficulty turning your head to the side for 1 to 2 weeks.
- Your skin may feel dry and rough for several months.
- Your face and ears may look and feel strange and be distorted from the swelling.
- Men may need to shave behind their ears, where beard-growing skin is repositioned.

APPEARANCE

- A pale, bruised and puffy face for several weeks.
- By the third week, you will look and feel much better.
- Final result is not fully realised for approximately 6 months.

FOLLOW-UP CARE

- Drainage tube will be removed within 1 to 2 days.
- Facial support bandage may be removed in 1 to 3 days.
- Sutures are usually removed from in front of the ear in 7 to 10 days, and eyelid sutures in 4 to 5 days.
- Staples in the hairline are removed in 10 days post-operatively.
- Sutures in the hairline will dissolve within 6 to 8 weeks.
- A good skincare range to help maintain and improve the results of the facelift can be purchased at MASC Laser Clinic with assistance from one of our qualified skincare therapists.

WHEN TO CALL

- If you have increased swelling or bruising.
- If swelling and redness persist after a few days.
- If you have increased redness along the incision.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects to medications, such as rash, nausea, headache and vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 37°C.
- If you have any drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odour.
- If you have bleeding from the incisions that does not stop with light pressure.

EMERGENCY NUMBER: 072 543 5998

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