

Have questions? Call Patrick Hudson MD 505-242-0070.

HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF FOLLOWING A FACELIFT

RECOVERY ROOM STAFF: Get patient representative to sign, give patient a copy & keep a copy in record

MEDICINES: take all medicines as prescribed on the bottle. The most important is the antibiotic and you need to take this four times a day. Remember that all narcotics can cause nausea so try to use non-narcotic pain killers like ibuprofen(Advil®) or acetaminophen (Tylenol®) as soon as possible.

POSITION: it helps to reduce swelling If the area that has had surgery is kept elevated.

DIET: for the first few hours after surgery use clear liquids only. This includes ginger ale and other fizzy drinks . Use drinks that have sugar in them rather than diet drinks so you get some nutrition. After 6 hours you can take any liquids. After twelve hours or the morning after surgery begin with a soft diet and later in the day a regular diet. You may find that Vitamin C 1G twice a day helps to reduce bruising and some patients like to use Arnica tablets.

SEX: you can resume sexual activity when this is comfortable, avoid pressure on the area of surgery.

BANDAGE/DRESSING: I keep bandages to a minimum. If you need any special care the recovery room nurse or I will tell you. Leave all dressings in place for 48 hours. After that time you can remove them and re-apply If directed.

STITCHES: the stitches are dissolvable and do not need any special care. Avoid getting them wet for 48 hours. Soaking them with a clean warm (NOT hot),wet cloth will help to remove scabs.

BATHING: provided there are no open wounds you can bathe after 48 hours. When you dry the area of surgery, use a clean towel and pat dry, do not rub. Re-apply the garment

SCAR: right after surgery scars are not very noticeable. Usually, over the next few weeks they increase in redness and thickness and then fade over 6-12 months. Some people form thick scars. After 2-4 weeks you may be able reduce the redness and itching using special strips such as Scarguard® available from the office.

SLEEP: you can sleep in any comfortable position but avoid pressure on any area where you had surgery.

EXERCISE: for the first day or two take it easy although if you feel well enough walking a short distance is beneficial. The risk of bleeding is greatest for two weeks so take it easy. After that time you can gradually increase your exercise. do not lift more than 25 lb. for four weeks. After six weeks you can return to all normal activity but build up gradually.

GARMENT: you will be provided with a wrap at the time of surgery. Use this as needed.

INFECTION: infection is rare but if you run a high fever (>102 F), or notice increasing redness and pain you need to call the office.

BLOOD CLOTS: a serious risk of any operation is a blood clot that can break off and cause serious medical problems. For this reason you should get up and walk around a little even the day of surgery. If you were given TED stockings, do not let them roll down and act as a tourniquet. If you have difficulty breathing or leg pain in the legs go immediately to the emergency room and they can call me. Aspirin increases the risk of bleeding but may help reduce the risk of blood clots. Do not use it during the first 2-3 days. after that time although it may increase the risk of bleeding it may be worth taking it to reduce the risk of blood clots. This is especially true if you decide to travel at any time over the 6-12 weeks after surgery.

WORK: this depends on your job. Most people go back to work at 1-2 weeks. Do not lift anything heavy or do vigorous work for 6 weeks.

ICE: careful application of ice to the garment over the suctioned area for 48 hours can reduce swelling and bruising.

NO SMOKING: you should not smoke or be exposed to second hand smoke

EMERGENCIES: if you are having a serious emergency such as difficulty breathing or severe red bleeding go straight to the nearest emergency room and get them to call me. Otherwise call the office. During regular hours they will advise you and contact me. After hours there is a recorded message that tells you how best to reach me. This is not a messaging system, so do not leave a message. Listen to the instructions and dial the number given. I am unable to answer questions about appointments or make appointment after hours. Call during regular hours for appointments. If you break a stitch it is unlikely that it can be replaced as an emergency so keep the area clean and I will make a decision about this when seen in the office for your next appointment.

SPECIAL CARE: _____

PATIENT OR REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE AND DATE : _____