

# Postoperative Instructions – Face Lift and Neck Lift

Maximize your cosmetic results after facelift or neck lift surgery by following these basic post-treatment instructions. Please contact the office with any questions.

## General

- Numbness or stiffness around the neck, cheek, face, and ears is common
- Keep hair dryer on cool setting. Be very careful while brushing hair.
- Make-up may be used one week following the procedure
- No smoking or alcohol
- No aspirin, ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil, or similar anti-inflammatory medication. You will be advised you when you may resume taking these medications.
  - Other blood thinners, such as Coumadin or Plavix, must also be discontinued, under the guidance of your primary care physician.
- No herbal medications, supplements, or teas.
  - Increased risk of bleeding include, but are not limited to Vitamin E, garlic, ginger, ginkgo, ginseng, kava, and St. John's Wort, fish oil, and green tea
  - Arnica montana herbal *tablet* may help reduce bruising and swelling

## Diet

- Advance slowly from liquids to soft, then solid foods. No restrictions on specific type of food or drink. Drink plenty of fluids. Do not chew gum.

## Activity

- Sleep with your head elevated for the first 48 hours, to help reduce facial swelling.
- Do NOT blow nose.
- Avoid sneezing. If unable to avoid sneezing, then sneeze with your mouth open.
- Do NOT bend over or hang your head down.
- No heavy lifting, straining, strenuous activity, or sex for at least 2 weeks.

## Wound Care

- Remove your gauze dressing after 2 days. Small amounts of blood is normal.
- Keep clean ice-packs, wrapped in a clean cloth, over the area for the first 48 hours. Use ice every hour while awake to help reduce swelling.
- Steri-strip tape bandages may have been applied to your incision. Leave this tape in-place. The tape will gradually peel off in a few days.
- Place plain petrolatum ointment (ex. Vaseline) via a cotton-tip applicator on the incisions. Keep moist with ointment at all times for 1 month. *Do not use any other creams/lotions.*
- Keep the incision dry. You may wash the area with a mild soap and luke warm water *after* 2 days. Do not soak the area in water, or leave wet dressing against wound.
- Gently pat the area dry with a clean towel. Do not rub.
- Avoid direct sun exposure. Generally, you may start using sunscreen over the area at 1 week after the sutures are removed.
- Wear elastic neck support dressing continuously for 1 week after surgery then every night, removing only to apply ointment. Elastic support should *not* be tight, but rather provide a gentle “hug” to area. Keep chin slightly up when wrapping the elastic support.