

FACE / NECK LIFT

AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Facial rejuvenation can entail reversing the effects of aging in one area of the face or the entire neck, face, eyelids and brow. Your decision for facial cosmetic surgery is an individual one and the plan will be discussed in your consultations with Dr. Trussler. Each area of the face may require different amounts of care depending on what is performed. The neck and face component of facial rejuvenation involves tightening the neckline, which involves repair of the superficial neck muscles under the chin (anterior platysmaplasty) as well as removal of fat and skin to define the jaw line. This is combined with a SMAS (Superficial Musculo-Aponeurotic System) face-lift, which repositions the facial soft tissue on this strong structure to provide a natural and long-lasting facelift. Dr. Trussler advises at least one night of observation so that his patients are comfortable and confident in their recovery after this type of surgery.

PREPARING FOR SURGERY

One Week Prior to Surgery:

- Stop all Aspirin, NSAIDs (Motrin™ (Ibuprofen), Alieve™ (Naprosyn), etc.) and Vitamin supplements containing fish oil and Vitamin E, 1 week prior to surgery, as they can all promote bleeding.
- Have requested study results (labs, mammogram, medical clearance, etc.) forwarded to the office.
- Pick up 4 x 4 gauze, triple anti-biotic ointment (Neosporin™ or generic), Refresh™ Plus/PM eye care if eyelid or brow surgery is planned, Hibiclens™ Skin Cleanser, and paper tape at the pharmacy.

Three Days Prior to Surgery:

- Start Hibiclens™ Skin Cleanser (available at pharmacy) as a face wash for all facial cases.
- Start Bromelain 3 days ahead of surgery (2 pills 3 times per day on an empty stomach).
- Arnica is provided and should be started after surgery (3 tabs sublingual 3xday).

THE DAY OF SURGERY

- Wear something loose and comfortable that has a zipper in the front.
- Nothing to eat or drink after midnight.

- If you take routine medications, it is appropriate to skip your morning dose of medications. Please discuss taking thyroid medication, cardiac and/or blood pressure medications prior to surgery.
- Bring your prescribed post-surgical medications with you, for use immediately after surgery, if needed.
- Arrive at the surgery center at least one hour prior to the surgery start time.

POST-OP CARE:

Have someone drive you home and stay with you for 2-3 days.

Medications will be called to your preferred pharmacy prior to surgery.

- Take pain medication and muscle relaxers as prescribed. Do not drink alcohol with these medications. Over the counter stool softeners and/or laxatives should be taken with the pain medication to prevent constipation. Colace, Biscodyl, Milk of Magnesia are all available at your pharmacy and can be taken as directed.

Do not smoke or be around smokers as smoking even second hand smoke delays healing and increase risk of complications.

Get plenty of rest. The general anesthesia, oral steroids and/or pain medication can all promote insomnia; therefore a sleep aid may be taken if needed.

Follow a well balanced diet to include protein and limit the amount salt intake. Protein supplementation can be started one to two weeks before surgery and should include over 30 grams of additional protein. This should be continued for three weeks after surgery.

A high salt diet or meal, can lead to increased swelling and prolonged recovery.

Oral hydration should include the use of electrolyte containing fluids such as Gatorade or a low calorie substitute. Limit the amount of caffeinated beverages as they can promote dehydration; however Dr. Trussler recommends you maintain your daily average of caffeine to avoid headaches.

ACTIVITIES:

Apply ice packs and/or bags of ice (small crushed ice or frozen peas in a zip lock baggy is best) to your cheeks and eyes as much as possible during the day for the first 3 – 5 hours to reduce the amount of swelling you have after surgery. Swelling will peak in 48-72 hours.

Keep your head elevated at least 45% above your heart at all times to decrease swelling for 2 weeks.

Avoid turning your head to either side as this will pull on the stitch lines. To turn, move your head and shoulders as a unit.

Avoid massaging and rubbing your face and eyes for at least 10 days after the surgery to avoid disruption of internal sutures.

Do not lift anything heavier than 10 pounds for 3 weeks.

Do not drive for 7-10 days until/or when your vision is normal and your neck is comfortable and no longer taking pain medication.

Smiling, yawning, massaging or pulling on the eyelids should be avoided for 1 week after surgery. This is especially important the first few days following removal of the stitches.

Do not run, lift weights, play tennis or golf for 3-4 weeks after surgery (keep your heart rate under 100 beats over one minute for 3 weeks).

Cardiovascular exercises can be resumed gradually after 3 weeks

Heavy lifting/stretching (Yoga) can be resumed after 6 weeks.

INCISION AND FACE CARE:

On the first day after the surgery, Dr. Trussler will remove all operative dressings, which include gauze, non-adherent gauze, ointment, cotton padding and elastic wraps.

There will be 2 small drain tubes that will be removed at this time as well. They are placed under the neck skin and exit behind the ear and help collect fluid under the skin.

No formal dressing will be re-applied; only ointment and light gauze will be applied for the trip home.

When the facial dressings are removed you can begin washing your face (but not your eyelids) gently with a mild soap and rinse with water. It will not hurt to get water on the stitches or in the eyes. Make sure someone is with you at your first shower, usually our nurse.

Bacitracin Ointment can be applied to the incisions for 2 days only to help eliminate crusting and promote suture dissolution.

You may wash your hair with baby shampoo the day after surgery. It may take several washings before all the crust is out of your hair. Do not use hair sprays, conditioners, gels, etc. while the stitches and clips are in place. Your hair may be dried with a blow dryer on a cool, not a hot setting

Cosmetics can be worn on the face as early as 5 days after surgery. However eyelid or eyelash cosmetics should NOT be worn until after the eyelid sutures have been removed and incisions are completely healed (if eyelid surgery was performed).

Hair coloring should be delayed until 3 weeks or more after surgery when healing is completed and no crusts remain.

The incision and any areas of bruising can be lightly dressed with a fragrance free moisturizing cream starting one week after surgery. This will promote early softening and maturation of these areas.

Skin care should be kept to a minimum for the first week after surgery.

EYE CARE (APPLICABLE IF A BLEPHAROPLASTY WAS PERFORMED):

Apply the Swiss eye masks for the first 3-5 days. The cooling effect helps to reduce the amount of swelling you will have after surgery. Also they help to protect your eyes from drying out, as they provide a hydrated environment while your eyes recover.

- **Swiss Eye Mask Care:** You will be discharged with a set of gel eye masks. Make sure you keep these masks cold and wet and change them every 15-20 minutes (Do Not Freeze). When these eye masks dry out, you can use frozen peas in a sealed Ziploc baggy.

Apply Refresh™ PM eye ointment (available over the counter) in each eye as often as you need them (6-10 x per day is normal). This is a thicker consistency than the regular Refresh™ Plus drops and should be used routinely for the first 2 to 3 days and then only in the evening for the next 2 weeks.

Use Refresh Plus eye drops (use at least 8-10 x per day) during the day as often as needed to keep your eyes moist and comfortable.

On the day after surgery apply ophthalmic Polysporin ointment 3 times per day for 2 days only. Apply just enough to keep crusts from forming on the stitches and to keep the area from feeling tight. Do this for 2 days only as it can cause skin irritation.

Use Tobradex® eye drops in each eye (2 drops) 3 times per day for the first 5-7 days if prescribed by Dr. Trussler.

Contacts can be worn when the eyes start feeling normal and the majority of the swelling has subsided. This is usually about 2 weeks after surgery. If it is necessary to pull down on your eyelid to insert them, they should not be worn for 10 days. Wear glasses until your eyes are comfortable enough for contacts.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER:

The most common complaint after surgery is a mild headache.

Your face and neck will feel tight and there will be a feeling of numbness in the cheek areas for several weeks to months after the surgery. This is normal and will disappear over time and the feeling will return. This will gradually relax with time.

Moderate swelling and bruising of the face and neck is expected; this will subside in 3 to 6 weeks.

It is common to have discomfort and mild burning at the incisions after facelift surgery – this is normal, and will improve shortly after surgery.

Discomfort in the areas of surgery may worsen with increased activity and relates to swelling and internal sutures.

You can expect some slight oozing (bloody) from the suture lines and swelling of the incisions. Gauze can be reapplied if it is bothersome. However, you should call the office at (512) 450-1077 if you have a continuous bleeding, significantly more swelling on one side of the face than the other, or any severe pain and associated swelling.

Tightness of the neck is a normal feeling after this surgery. This may worsen over the first 2 days. This will relax with time and can be relieved with maintaining the head of the bed elevated and with compression.

Swelling may also cause the lower lid to pull away from the eye and look like fluid is in the white part of your eye. This is not uncommon. This will subside as the swelling goes down.

There may be a feeling of numbness of the lower face that will subside with time.

Red discoloration of the incisions may occur if there is significant swelling, especially in the areas of sutures. This will resolve when as the stitches are removed and the incisions heal.

Constipation is common after any operation, and is secondary to the anesthetic, pain medication and dehydration. Please stay well hydrated and pick-up a stool softener and/or laxative with your prescription medications.

Recommendations include:

- Docusate (Colace) 100mg orally twice daily when taking pain medication
- Milk of Magnesia 30cc/1 tbsp. twice daily when taking pain medication
- Prune juice or Sorbitol orally
- Biscodyl or Magnesium Citrate as needed for constipation

WHEN TO CALL THE OFFICE:

- If you have increased swelling and bruising of one side of the face significantly more than the other. Remove any covering/dressing to make this determination if it is concerning, as this may represent a hematoma (collection of blood) or a seroma (collection of clear fluid).
- If you have increasing redness or swelling around the incision.
- 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 greenish drainage from incision or notice a foul odor.
- If you notice some vaginal burning and itching as a result of the antibiotics used during and after surgery.

For medical questions, please call the office at 512.450.1077. Dr. Trussler should be paged/called on his cell phone for any urgent or emergent medical issues.

FOLLOW-UP CARE:

Your permanent sutures will be removed gradually over a 5 to 10 day period. Generally the stitches behind the ear are dissolvable and will fall out, though if persistent after one week will be removed.

- *Dr. Trussler will remove your dressings and drains the day after the procedure.*

It is important to be seen by Dr. Trussler at 5 and 10 days after your procedure. You will then schedule follow up visits at 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 6 months and 1 year for post-op check-ups.