

## POST-SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS: FACELIFT

Once your surgery is completed, you must follow all the instructions given to you in order to heal properly and have a good outcome. Use this as a checklist of progress as you heal. Included are normal post-surgical experiences and key health considerations that may be a cause of concern.

### TYPICAL POST-OPERATIVE SYMPTOMS

Typical symptoms of facelift surgery and signs to watch for following a facelift include:

**Tightness or numbness of the cheeks, face and neck: Bruising and swelling beneath the eyes. A pale, swollen complexion:** These are normal experiences as the skin, tissues and sensory nerves heal. Pain medication will help you cope with any discomfort. **Consistent sharp pain should be reported to our office immediately.**

If you have a drain placed in any incision, you may also experience localized discomfort at the drain site.

### CALL THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- **A high fever, (over 101°) severe nausea and vomiting, continued dizziness or incoherent behavior, such as hallucinations.**
- **Any pain that cannot be controlled by your pain medication.**
- **Bright red skin that is hot to the touch.**
- **Excessive bleeding or fluid seeping through the incisions.**
- **A severely misshapen appearance or excessive bruising or fluid retention that is localized to one region.**

**To alleviate any discomfort, and to reduce swelling, you may apply cool (not cold) compresses to your eyes.** Do not apply ice or anything frozen directly on the skin. Soak soft plain white washcloths or gauze squares in ice water and wring out well. Apply directly to the eyes, but not to the cheeks or neck. Do not apply any pressure. Apply cool compresses for no longer than 20-minute intervals. Do not apply any heat.

### DAY OF SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

You will only be released to the care of a responsible adult. All of these instructions must be clear to the adult who will monitor your health and support you around the clock in the first 24 hours following surgery.

### DRESSINGS

- **You will be placed in a compression garment or wrap immediately following surgery.** Wear this exactly as directed. Dr. Tanna will remove this in the office 24-48 hours after surgery. Keep all dressings on and dry until your first postoperative office visit with Dr. Tanna. He will remove dressings in the office and instruct you on when and how to shower following surgery.
- **Keep your incisions clean.** Your incisions will seep fluid and some blood for a short time after surgery. The compression garment or wrap will be stained with some blood. Do not remove any crusting near your stitches. Do not remove any staples, sutures or steri-strips. If you have any drains placed, follow the instructions for cleansing and caring for drains.

## ACTIVITY

- **Rest, but not bed rest:** While rest is important in the early stages of healing, equally important is that you are ambulatory: meaning that you are walking under your own strength. If you are drinking plenty of water, you will be appropriately ambulatory to the bathroom to void. This is sufficient ambulation.
- **Refrain from any strenuous exercise and from bending or lifting.** Do not engage in any stressful activities. Let others tend to you.
- **Dr. Tanna will instruct you on when to begin your regular fitness routine.** This is often 4-6 weeks after surgery.

## SLEEP

- **Recline, do not lie down:** This will be more comfortable for you, and can reduce swelling. Always keep your head elevated. Do not bend forward or over.
- **You may begin sleeping in a modified reclining position.** However do not sleep lying flat or on your stomach. If you are a side sleeper, two pillows under your head and a soft pillow under your mid-back and shoulders may offer more comfort.

## NUTRITION

- **Fluids are critical following surgery.** Stick to non-carbonated, non-alcoholic, caffeine-free and green tea-free beverages including fruit juices and water, milk and yogurt drinks. You must consume at least 8 ounces of fluid every 2 hours. Stick with soft, bland, nutritious food for the first 24 hours.

## MEDICATION

- **Take all medication, exactly as prescribed.** Oral pain medication and antibiotics will be prescribed before surgery.

## ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING

- **Do not smoke.** Smoking can greatly impair your safety prior to surgery and your ability to heal following surgery. You must not smoke. While incisions may have healed, smoking deprives your body of necessary oxygen that can result in poorly healed, wide, and raised scars.