

INSTRUCTIONS ON CARING FOR YOURSELF AT HOME

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Face/Neck Lift

1. After surgery elevate your head and shoulders on a 45° angle wedge rest (no pillows!). Don't use any pillows as you want to avoid bending forward at the neck for the first 2 weeks.
2. Avoid straining of any kind for the first 5 days. When awake in bed please flex your ankles and legs up and down 4-6 times every hour.
3. Apply covered ice bags or Swiss eye masks (keep them cold or in ice) to the exposed areas of your face for the first 72 hours to reduce swelling post-operatively.
4. If you have pain or discomfort, take the pain medication every 4-6 hours. It is best to take the pain medication with crackers, jello, etc. If you do not have pain please do not take the pain medication. Do not drink alcohol while you are taking pain medication.
5. A light diet is best following surgery that day. Begin by taking liquid slowly and progress to soups or jello. You may start with a soft, regular diet the next day, high in protein.
6. You may have drains in place under the skin, after surgery (in the neck.) These will be secured and you will/can sleep in them – we will show you, but avoid pulling on them. The bulbs connected to the end of the drains should be kept compressed at all times. Instructions regarding the drains will be given to your caretaker. The drains and head dressing are usually removed within 1-2 days.
7. You can expect some swelling of the face and eyes after surgery. If you develop acute onset of swelling on one side of your face or neck, which is definitely more pronounced than on the other side, or if you are having pain, which is NOT relieved by the pain medication, please call Dr. Constantine immediately on the office line 24/7. If it is after hours, you will be connected to Dr. Constantine immediately.
8. 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.

Thank you for letting us care for you.

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9. **DO NOT SMOKE.** This is very important.

10. Facial movements (smiling, talking, chewing, yawning, etc.) should be kept to a minimum for the first week.

11. After your dressings and drains have been removed you may wash your hair with baby shampoo. Lather your hair gently using the palms of your hands and rinse thoroughly until the soap is out. It may take several washings before all the crust and ointment is out of your hair. Do not use hairspray, conditioner, gels, etc. while the stitches and clips are in place. You may start washing your face gently and use a moisturizer on your face, being careful to keep it away from the stitch lines.

12. Your hair may be dried with a blow dryer on a cool, not a hot, setting.

13. Hair coloring should be delayed until 3 weeks after surgery when healing is completed and no crust remains.

14. Normal activity can be gradually resumed after 3 weeks but strenuous activity (heart rate above 100 beats per minute and lifting objects greater than 10 pounds) should be avoided for another week.

15. The skin of your face is sensitive to sunlight after surgery. Protect your facial skin from excessive exposure to the sun for 8 weeks. Wear a wide brim hat and sunscreen (SPF 20 or greater with UVA and UVB protection) if you are in the sun for prolonged periods, or even on cloudy days for at least 6 months.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND SCAR CARE:

- Your face/neck will feel tight but not necessarily look tight (it will look natural) and there will be a feeling of numbness in these areas for several weeks to months after surgery. This is normal and will disappear over time and the feeling will return.

- Cosmetics can be worn on the face as early as 10 days after surgery. However, eyelid or eyelash cosmetics should not be worn until 7 days after all the eyelid sutures have been removed. There may be a feeling of numbness of the eyelids that will subside.

- Take all medications only as directed.

If you have nausea, vomiting, rash, shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medication, please call the office.

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- If you develop a fever (oral temperature greater than 101°), redness or increased pain at the site of your surgical incisions, please notify Dr. Constantine immediately.
- **DO NOT WEAR PULLOVER CLOTHING OR HAIRPIECES FOR 3 WEEKS AFTER YOUR FACELIFT, AS YOU COULD DISRUPT YOUR EARLOBE OR HAIRLINE INCISIONS.**
- It is important to be seen by Dr. Constantine after your surgery. **IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL DR. CONSTANTINE.** There is no such thing as a minor question. I would rather you call me than wonder and not do the right thing, so please call my office.

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