

## **FACIAL SURGERY AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS**

- If you received anesthesia during the procedure, you will be sleepy for the rest of the day and maybe tomorrow. **DO NOT** drive, operate any machinery, or do anything requiring coordination for the rest of the day. Do not sign any legal documents or make any important decisions in the next 24 hours. If you are a smoker, you may experience a rise in body temperature tomorrow. After anesthesia, you should breathe deeply each waking hour in order to keep the lungs clear.
- On the day of your surgery and during that night, you should have a responsible adult to be with you or for your protection and safety. You may go to the bathroom with assistance.
- Use medications as instructed. Many patients find Tylenol to be adequate to control postoperative discomfort. **DO NOT** take aspirin or aspirin products (e.g. Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, Motrin, Naproxen, Excedrin). If any of these are prescribed to you by another physician, please advise our office.

### **DIET**

- For the first 24 hours after surgery we recommend a light diet. We do not recommend *any alcoholic beverages for 24 hours after your procedure. After that, we do not recommend combining your postoperative pain medication with alcoholic beverages.* After the first 24 hours you may advance to a regular diet as you can tolerate.

### **THINGS TO HAVE**

- Prescription pain medication
- Prescription nausea medication
- Aquaphor
- Skin Medica Procedure 360 Kit (if indicated)
- Stool Softener

### **YOUR DRESSING**

- **DO NOT** change your dressing or get it wet unless instructed otherwise.
- Dr. Patel will change your dressing the day after surgery.
- **DO NOT** remove 2<sup>nd</sup> dressing until Dr. Patel instructs you to do so.

### **Instructions on moving the head and jaws for the first week:**

- Moving your jaw will feel tight and uncomfortable. That is normal. That will improve with time.
- Decrease your jaw movement as much as possible when you eat, talk, or laugh. You can make eating easier by keeping to a soft or liquid diet or a regular diet with smaller portions.

## **WOUND CARE**

- Wound care is extremely important and can help with healing. Please follow the instructions carefully.
- After the dressings are removed, leave them off. You will still have sutures/staples in place. The nonabsorbable sutures will be removed 7-10, or when clinically indicated, days after surgery.
- 1. Clean the incisions along the sides of the face by the ear with a cotton-tip soaked with water. (NOT EYE INCISIONS!!)
  2. Dab the incisions dry.
  3. Place Aquaphor over the incisions.
- You will have sutures and staples in areas of the hair-bearing scalp. Be careful when washing your hair or combing so that the incisions do not separate and the sutures do not get caught.
- Instructions on washing your hair:
  1. Mix Baby shampoo with warm water in a container.
  2. Pour the solution over your hair several times.
  3. Stand under the shower and rinse off.

## **EYELID SWELLING AFTERCARE**

Even though you may not have had surgery on your eyelids, they may swell. Here are some instructions on what to do.

- **Ice Compresses**
  1. For the first 2 days only, apply ice compresses against the closed eyelids for 10 minutes each hour while awake.
    - A) Use a cold pack or a bag of frozen peas and wrap in a clean soft washcloth OR
    - B) Place a cup of crushed ice into a Ziploc bag and wrap in a clean soft washcloth if it is too cold.
  2. Do not interrupt sleep for ice application.
- **Warm Compresses – BE CAREFUL TO NOT BURN YOURSELF**
  1. For days 3 to 7, apply a warm compress against the closed eyelids for 5-10 minutes 4 times per day.
    - A) Take a clean washcloth and wring it out in warm tolerable water.
    - B) DO NOT USE HEATING PADS!!!!
  2. Do not interrupt sleep for warm compress application.

## **WHAT IS NORMAL**

- You will probably experience moderate discomfort for 2 to 3 days after surgery.
- Slight oozing of blood from the incision site over the first 2 days.
- Swelling, which is the body's way of healing, can last for several months; the swelling will likely be worse on day 2 or 3 after surgery and then improve significantly over the next several weeks.

- Some black and blueness which is associated with healing; because of gravity, the black and blueness may settle down into your cheeks and even your neck. All patients are different: sometimes the bruising is gone in less than a week, other times it lasts 2-3 weeks.
- Feeling of dryness (like there is sand in your eye) or excessive tearing; lubricating eye ointment and artificial tears at least 4 to 6 times a day will help this.
- Some blurry vision from swelling and ointment.
- Take comfort in the fact that the “tight” feeling, numbness, bumps and irregularities, are normal after surgery and slowly improve over weeks to months.
- The body heals a surgical scar in slow stages. Gradually improving surgical scars and contours can be expected **for up to 1 year after surgery.**
- Asymmetric smile is not uncommon and will resolve in several weeks.
- Temporary hair loss along the incision lines.
- A fine line scar in front of the ear and thicker scars behind the ear and in the hair. These may persist for up to one year, but soften with time and can be covered nicely with the hair itself.
- As the bruising and swelling start to decrease and you start to pick up some more of your normal routine, you will feel more like your normal self.

#### **WHAT TO AVOID**

- Driving or operating heavy equipment after sedation or while taking prescription pain medication.
- Heavy lifting or strenuous activities for 7 days.
- Makeup until the sutures are removed or the incision lines are well healed.
- Sun exposure; if you must go into the sun, wear a large brimmed hat and sunscreen.
- Sleeping flat. Place 2-3 pillows behind head at night as it will help with swelling.
- Smoking/tobacco as these slow the healing process.

#### **AFTERCARE ACTIVITY**

- You may resume showering and shampooing after your dressings are removed. You may resume showering **neck down 2 days after surgery.**
- The **ONLY** exercise for the first 3 weeks is walking: Outside walking is ok after 2wks.
- You may return to the gym after 4wks, doing only one-half of your usual regimen and take 3 weeks to return to your regular regimen. Weight, machines, running, swimming, golf, tennis, yoga, and Pilates after 3 weeks
- Please refrain from sexual activity for 3-4 weeks.
- For the first 3 weeks lift no more than 10 pounds.
- You may return to sedentary work 2 weeks after your surgery.
- Please refrain from driving a car for at least 3-5 days after your surgery date. After 3-5 days you may resume driving if you feel comfortable. Please ensure you are off all narcotic pain medications before resuming driving.

**Call Dr. Patel on his cell phone (253) 733-7048 if you experience the following:**

- A sudden, severe decrease or dimness in your vision.
- Severe, unrelenting, or stabbing pains, particularly if it is associated with vomiting or fever.
- Extreme swelling around the surgical area that is very hot, firm, or tense.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects to medication; such as, rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 101 degrees.
- If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage or notice a foul odor.
- If you have excessive bleeding or saturation of the dressing. A small amount of bleeding may appear on the dressing or pad.
- If you have an increase in pain after the first 48 hours.
- If you experience persistent nausea or vomiting.